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AUGUST, 1913

The Dancing Elf

By Victoria Sackville-West

I woke to daylight, and to find
A wreath of fading vine-leaves, rough entwined,
Lying, as dropped in hasty flight, upon my floor.

Dropped from thy head, sweet Spirit of the night,
Who cam'st, with footstep light,
Blown in by the soft breeze, as thistledown,
In through my open door.
Whence? From the woodland, from the fields of corn,
From flirting airily with the bright moon,
Playing throughout the hours that go too soon,
Ready to fly at the approach of morn,
Thou cam'st,
Bent on the curious quest
To see what mortal guest
Dwelt in the one-roomed cottage built to face the dawn.

Thou did'st pause
Shy, timid, on the threshold, though there laughed
The mischief in thy roguish eyes, then soft
Thou cross't the room on tip-toe to my bed,
One finger on thy lip,
Cautious to make no slip,
—I saw the wreath of vine-leaves on thy head.
Then with a twirl
Thinking I slept,

And a joyous whirl,
Into a dance leapt
The careless spirit too long restrained;
The purest dancing,
Feet sometimes chancing
To touch the ground;
A lithe body twisting and coiling,
Advancing, recoiling,
Then starting up with a fresh high bound.
To hang for a moment poised in the air,
And a glimpse of white teeth glancing
And a laughing face beneath tossing hair;
An orgy, a revel, a living joy,
Embodied in one slim woodland boy,
Dancing forward, backward, now here, now there,
Swaying to every impulse unconstrained.

Thou wert too pure for Bacchus, and too young for Pan.
What wert thou? In the daytime dost thou sleep
In a cave
Like a grave,
Till the moon calls thee, in the sleep of man,
To thy light revels through the sombre deep
Wood's shadows to an open space among the trees,
Where the breeze
Makes music through the branches for thy dance,
And the large-eyed and silent deer stand round,
Peeping through tree-trunks, and each forest sound
—The trickling stream's
Murmur in its dreams,
The shepherd's pipe, far-echoing by chance,
The tender nightingale's sweet trill of melody,—
Melt all for thee to one soft harmony,
While for the lighting of thy mossy slope
The moon thy lover sheds an opal glow,
Pale silver-green, the colour of the leaves
Of olive-trees,
The limelight on the stage for Youth and Joy and Hope?
And at the first pink menace of the dawn
Must thou go,
Fly to thy cave, thou little pagan Faun?

THE DANCING ELF

The fount of joy was bubbling in thine eyes,
Dancing was in thy feet,
And on thy lips a laugh that never dies,
Unutterably sweet.
Dance on! for ever young, for ever fair,
Light-footed as a frightened bounding deer,
Thy wreath of vine-leaves twisted in thy hair,
Through all the changing seasons of the year,
And tread, to Autumn's gorgeous hymn of praise,
And to the happy Spring's light lilt of pleasure,
And to the dirgeful chant of Winter's days
An ever-varying, ever-suited measure;
And in the Summer, when the reeking earth
Swings a vast censer, as it is most meet,
Praise thou for lavish gifts, new hopes, new birth,
Praise with the dancing of thy tireless feet!

I woke to daylight, and to find
A wreath of fading vine-leaves, rough entwined,
Lying, as dropped in hasty flight, upon my floor.

Florence, 1912. To R. G.

An Old Boot in a Ditch

By T. P. Cameron Wilson

There is an epic of the winding path
That might be sung by you—
Mornings when Earth came glowing from her bath
And shook her drowsy laughter into dew,
And little ways your younger brothers made
Went up the hills and danced into the blue.

Noons when the great sun hammered out a blade
Upon the silent anvil of the downs,
And in divine inconsequence you strayed
Over the hill kings, with their bramble-crowns
And saw, across the meadow-patterned plain,
The far still smoke of little valley towns.

And evenings, when the Earth gave thanks for rain,
And all the washen soil of her did seem
Sweeter than little children who have lain
All night among the roses of a dream;
And great white clouds went up the stairs of God
And gnats danced out above the misty stream.

Yet most, I think, the broad high road you trod
Would weave its marching splendour with your song—
The weariness that held the feet you shod,
The weariness that makes all roads too long,
Until the spirit trails its beaten wings
And finds the whole earth given to the strong,

And all the thousand crushed and broken things
Whose hope has snapped beneath the feet of Gold
Peer upward through the dust His passing flings
And see Him watch the hopeless road unfold—
Staring across the passion at His feet
With yellow eyes that glitter, and are cold.

AN OLD BOOT IN A DITCH

It is not so, but when our spirits meet
Old Weariness, with his rust-eaten knife,
There is no corner of our house kept sweet
That is not trampled bloody by the strife,
Until with hungry fingers he lays bare
A rawness hidden in the quick of life.

It is not so. In your green silence there
You see the world pass like a lean old witch,
You watch the stars at night, and you may share
That small, fierce love wherein the soil is rich,
And know that half the gifts of God are won
By centipedes and fairies in the ditch.

A Song in Time of Waiting

By Richard Buxton

Because the days are long for you and me,
I make this song to lighten their slow time,
So that the weary waiting fruitful be
Or flowered at least by this my limping rhyme.
The days are very long
And may not shortened be by any chime
Of measured words or any fleeting song;
Yet let us gather blossoms while we wait
And sing brave tunes against the face of Fate.

Day after day goes by: the exquisite
Procession of the variable year,
Summer, a sheaf with flowers bound up in it,
And Autumn, tender till the frosts appear
And dry the humid skies,
And Winter, following on, aloof, austere,
Clad in the garments of a frore sunrise,
And Spring again. May not too many a Spring
Make both our voices tremble as we sing!

The days are empty, empty and the nights
Are cold and void. There is no single gleam
Across the space unpeopled of delights,
Save only, now and then, some thin-blood dream,
Some stray of summer weather.
The tedious hours like slow-foot laggards seem
When you and I, my love, are not together
And when I hold you in my arms at last
The minutes go like April cloudlets past.

A SONG IN TIME OF WAITING

And yet no hidden charm, no desperate spell
  Can make these minutes longer, those less long:
No force there is that yearning can impel
  Against the callous years that do us wrong.
    No words, no whispered rune,
  No witchery and no Thessalian song
  Can make that far-off misty day more soon.
The bravest tune, the most courageous rhyme
Fall broken from the bastions of Time.

A long and dusty road it is to tread;
  Few are the wayside flowers and far apart,
And are no sooner plucked than witherèd
  When yearning heart is torn from yearning heart.
    A weary road it is,
  And yet far off I see clear waters start,
  And clean, sweet grass and tangled traceries
Of whispering leaves that laugh to see us come
And there, one day . . . one day, shall be our home.

The day will come. O dearest, do not doubt.
  It is not born as yet, but I shall see
Some day the fearless sunrise flashing out
  And know the night will give you up to me.
    O heart, my heart, be glad,
  Because the time will come at last when we
  Shall leave all grief and unlearn all things sad
And know the joy than which no sweeter is
And I shall sing a happier song than this.

Bal Masqué

By Henry Savage

. . . "fantasticalness—which is imagination masked and at the carnival."

A CRITIC IN *The Times.*

"Je me rappelle aussi qu'un autre soir, à un drame où je pleurais—j'étais si jeune!—ma maîtresse m'a dit: 'Ne pleurez pas comme ça, tout le monde vous regarde et vous me rendez ridicule.' J'ai continué a pleurer et elle m'a dit: 'Vous n'avez pas de cœur.'"

MAURICE DONNAY

The long lean fellows of the carnival
With mask and hood move silently about;
From these there is no foolish laugh or shout,
And none of all the crowd there at the ball
Is of that company fantastical
Save one whose loving dreams have ravelled out
The meaning of their presence there at all—
Oh, theirs is all the wisdom not a doubt!

The long lean fellows moving silently
About the crowded ballroom of my heart
And down the winding corridors apart
From the dull fools they mingle with, are my
Most intimate and only friends and I
Have no delight but in their perfect art.

Pour la Paix

By Anatole France

Il y a deux sortes de gens qui disent que la guerre des Balcans peut s'étendre et enflammer l'Europe et qui voient déjà l'Autriche aux prises avec la Russie; ces deux sortes de gens, également funestes, sont les poltrons que tout affole et les foux furieux qui ne rêvent que carnage. Les bons esprits ne se résigneront pas si facilement à la guerre universelle. Ils pensent qu'on peut, qu'on doit l'éviter et qu'on l'évitera.

Le gouvernement français, porté par la vague nationaliste qui soulève en ce moment les classes dirigeantes, a commis de grandes fautes. Il voulait sincèrement la paix: cela est hors de doute. Sans cela je dirais que sa politique fut folle et criminelle. Mais pour assurer le maintien de la paix en Europe, il a cru bon d'opposer la triple entente à la triple alliance et cette idée étroite et fausse a jeté notre diplomatie dans toutes sortes de difficultés et de périls. En effet ni la triple alliance, ni la triple entente n'ont été formées en vue de la question d'Orient et ces deux groupements ne présentaient, à cet égard, aucune cohésion réelle. Il fallait, tout en maintenant alliances et ententes, se joindre à l'Europe entière réunie en un conseil unique. On a mieux aimé se concerter avec la Russie. Et il n'est pas certain que Monsieur Poincaré en ait rapporté les meilleures inspirations. Voilà la faute grave de la politique française. Elle n'a pas eu de trop fâcheuses conséquences par ce que la paix est garantie par de bien autres raisons que la sagesse des gouvernants.

J'ai parlé des maîtres de l'heure avec indépendance. Je vais parler maintenant de la nation avec la même liberté, mais non pas avec la même précision et la même exactitude. L'opinion populaire est plus diverse et plus confuse que celle des chefs des partis et son obscurité laisse plus de champ à la passion et à l'erreur. Toutefois j'espère

atteindre la vérité avec une approximation suffisante. Consultons d'abord les journaux. Sans doute, le ton de la grande presse gouvernementale et financière, passée toute entière au service du nationalisme, est assez provoquant et parfois même assez menaçant à l'endroit de l'Allemagne, qui pourtant est fort innocente des évènements présents, qui se sont accomplis sans elle et, à certains égards, contre elle. Mais le bruit lointain des canons bulgares a reveillé dans le cœur d'un peuple qui fut longtemps belliqueux des souvenirs cruels. Le patriotisme est de tous les peuples et de tous les temps. En France, dans la bourgeoisie haute, moyenne et petite, il revêt une forme particulière et traditionnelle, le chauvinisme, qui n'a guère d'équivalent dans aucun autre pays, si ce n'est, peut-être, en Italie, et qui a des vivacités et des sonorités spéciales. Mais cet état d'esprit est aussi éloigné de la volonté guerrière que l'éloquence est éloigné de l'action. La vague nationaliste qui revient périodiquement en notre pays et qui aujourd'hui, comme au 16 mai, comme à l'époque du boulangisme, comme lors de l'affaire Dreyfus, menace de submerger la république, a porté très haut le militarisme chauvin; les gouvernements de droite, que nous avons depuis quelques temps, n'ont rien négligé pour favoriser cet élan en multipliant les revues et tous autres spectacles militaires et en organisant dans les grandes villes ces retraites en musique que suit parfois une populace délirante.

Mais il ne faut pas qu'on s'y trompe à l'étranger. Tout cela n'est que bruit et fumée. Il n'y a là nulle, nulle menace pour la paix de l'Europe. Il faut le dire bien haute et il est essentiel que personne ne s'y trompe. J'insiste, et ce n'est pas sans raison. On se connaît si mal de peuple à peuple, les génies des diverses nations sont impénétrables l'un à l'autre, on s'ignore si profondément entre voisins! J'ai toujours peur que des jeux d'enfants ne paraissent à l'étranger un mouvement national.

Une des manifestations les plus frappantes du nationalisme français c'est la loi militaire de trois ans, telle qu'elle a été présentée par le gouvernement et soutenue par toute la presse réactionnaire. Hâtons-nous de rappeler qu'elle a été présentée par les promoteurs comme une réplique nécessaire aux armements de l'Allemagne et acceptée comme telle par une fraction importante de l'opinion. Elle n'a pour

elle ni l'unanimité de l'armée ni même l'unanimité de la bourgeoisie, elle a contre elle le prolétariat tout entier et tous les paysans, autant qu'on peut constater une communauté d'opinion dans les populations agricoles. Quelques républicains de grande autorité en soutiennent le projet, et parmi eux il faut citer Clémenceau, violemment opposé en cette circonstance comme en toutes les autres à Jaurès et aux socialistes. Elle sera votée, elle sera votée par toute la droite du parlement renforcée d'une minorité de républicains. Mais ce serait une grande erreur de croire qu'elle sera votée dans un esprit belliqueux, avec une arrière pensée d'offensive. Dans l'esprit de ses plus énergiques promoteurs, dans la pensée des cléricaux et des réactionnaires qui la proclament nécessaire au salut national, elle répond à des préoccupations d'ordre social bien plus encore qu'à des pensées de défense contre l'étranger; elle constitue un premier essai d'une organisation rétrograde de la société; elle est dirigée contre le prolétariat français au moins autant que contre des envahisseurs éventuels; elle vise autant la Confédération Générale du Travail (C.G.T.) que la trouée des Vosges. Certes je ne prétends pas que telle est la pensée du naïf bourgeois, du citoyen candide; mais je crois fermement que telle est l'intention du gouvernement perfide et brutal qui l'a présentée et qui la soutient. Si vraiment ces ministres réacteurs, ces députés cléricaux, ces hommes d'affaires qui dirigent actuellement les affaires de notre pays avaient eu en vue un péril d'Outre Rhin, s'ils étaient vraiment soucieux de la défense nationale ils auraient proposé tout autre chose qu'un retour aux armées de métier, dont on sait l'insuffisance, ils auraient fait appel aux forces vives de la démocratie, ils auraient fait la nation armée, seule et grande ressource d'un pays libre et qui ne peut plus compter pour vaincre sur les seules ressources d'une armée de métier. Mais tel n'était pas le souci de nos maîtres. Ils ne voulaient que militariser le pays, afin de le rendre plus gouvernable.

Cette loi de trois ans, due à la collaboration de tous les partis de réaction et de quelques républicains autoritaires et anti-socialistes, si elle est une menace pour les développements de la démocratie française, n'est nullement une menace pour la paix du monde.

Un mouvement d'opinion dirigé par des industriels et

des financiers ne peut être très belliqueux, du moins en France et à l'époque où nous sommes. Nos financiers savent trop ce qu'ils perdraient si le crédit allemand s'effondrait tout à coup sous les obus. L'enchevêtrement des intérêts nous garantit l'union des peuples. L'internationale financière s'est constituée bien avant l'internationale ouvrière qui en est encore à ses débuts. Et c'est le lieu, ce me semble, de placer une observation très importante sur un fait très remarquable, qui n'a pas échappé sans doute à la sagacité des lecteurs anglais, mais sur lequel les amis de la paix ne sauraient trop porter leur attention. Les peuples ont tous des caractères communs, et dans un même temps, à un même degré de civilisation ils présentent entre eux plus de ressemblances que de dissemblances; ils ont tous le même amour-propre, le même sentiment de leur sécurité, le même zèle de s'enrichir et de s'accroître. Ils prennent les mêmes ombrages d'un puissant voisin et d'un heureux rival. Cela est vrai et c'est sur cette unité foncière de l'homme social qu'on peut fonder (je le dis en passant) toutes les espérances de paix et d'union; c'est sur cette unité foncière qu'on a déjà établi bien des ententes et bien des accords, c'est enfin ce qui rend l'humanité chère à nos cœurs. Mais le fait que les hommes sont partout à peu près les mêmes par le sentiment de leur intérêt privé et collectif, par les passions nationales, par l'ardeur patriotique, n'empêche pas des différences, les nuances très distinctes, les différences très marquées qu'on remarque dans la psychologie d'un peuple comparée à la psychologie d'un autre peuple. Eh! bien, ce qui me frappe dans le caractère du Français c'est l'idéalisme et le désintéressement de ses amitiés et de ses haines. Pour les amitiés, on y peut bien encore découvrir quelque trace d'intérêt; il serait par trop extraordinaire aussi qu'on ne songeât point à se servir de ses amis. Mais quant à ce qui est de ses haines et de ses animosités internationales, le Français, seul de sa sorte, ne semble jamais obéir qu'au sentiment et à la passion. Cela est unique. Si l'Anglais en veut à l'Allemagne, c'est parce que l'Allemagne lui dispute les marchés du monde et l'animadversion britannique pour le Germain augmente ou diminue selon que la concurrence allemande est plus ou moins nuisible à l'Angleterre. En France, vous n'entendrez jamais, vous

ne lirez jamais rien qui montre entre l'Allemagne et la France une tension économique, une rivalité, une concurrence. On poussera un cri d'alarme en voyant grandir le nombre des industries germaniques qui, établies sur notre sol, viennent *enrichir* la France. Surtout on craindra de voir en plusieurs maisons allemandes, installées à Paris ou dans nos provinces, des espions, des indicateurs, des auxiliaires de l'armée allemande, mais l'animosité, qui est réelle, en certains milieux a une autre source : elle est sentimentale, elle est désintéressée. Elle vient uniquement d'un souvenir cruel sur lequel on m'épargnera de revenir. Elle date de 1871. Après Jena, au temps où Madame de Staël portait à Weimar ses curiosités enthousiastes, la France aimait l'Allemagne, les générations de 1830 ou de 1848 étaient nourries de Goëthe, de Kant, d'Herder. Il n'y a pas antagonisme foncier, irréductible entre le tempérament allemand et le tempérament français. Nous n'assistons pas à une lutte mortelle entre l'industrie française et l'industrie allemande ; la France ne s'aperçoit pas qu'elle a un intérêt vital à détruire la puissance allemande. Non ! Il y a autre chose entre les deux peuples, beaucoup moins en apparence, beaucoup plus en réalité : le sentiment. Cela peut changer, tout s'use, tout finit. Mais cela est vif encore, et trop cuisant pour ne pas rendre les relations pénibles et quelquefois difficiles.

Dans l'intérêt de l'Allemagne comme dans l'intérêt de la France, dans l'intérêt de l'Angleterre comme dans l'intérêt de toute l'Europe et du monde entier, il faut que cette inimitié cesse ; la guerre ne trancherait rien. Nous ne sommes plus au temps où le vainqueur détruisait et réduisait en servitude le peuple vaincu. Aujourd'hui une guerre affaiblirait dans la même proportion, ou à peu près, le vainqueur et le vaincu et les laisserait tous deux dans la même situation l'un vis à vis de l'autre. Ce serait un désastre inutile, un crime vain. A cet égard, Norman Angell a exprimé, dans son livre, si bien raisonné, de la *Grande Illusion* des pensées sur lesquelles on ne saurait assez réfléchir.

" Si à l'époque des Danois," a-t-il dit, " l'Angleterre avait pu tuer tous les étrangers, elle s'en fut peut-être très bien trouvée. Aujourd'hui, si elle en faisait autant, la moitié de ses habitants mourraient de faim. . . . Si d'un côté de

la frontière, on produit du blé, et, de l'autre, du charbon, il y a solidarité entre les deux productions qui ne peuvent se passer l'une de l'autre. . . . L'échange de services s'impose; et il faut de part et d'autre s'en rendre compte ou mourir de faim."

Il y va de la prospérité du Monde et de l'avenir de la civilisation. Où allons-nous? Par la folie des armements, par la multiplicité des dreadnoughts et des canons, nous allons à la barbarie et à la folie furieuse. A qui le dis-je? Est-ce que la noble Angleterre ne commence pas à reconnaître, dans sa sagesse, que la puissance industrielle et commerciale d'un peuple, que l'hégémonie des mers dépend d'autre chose encore que du nombre des dreadnoughts, et qu'il vaut mieux s'entendre avec un rival même incommode, que de s'user à lui nuire?

Je bénis les paroles de paix prononcées par votre roi à la réception du président de la république française. Je lis avec les larmes de joie et de reconnaissance l'hymne de votre grand et généreux Rudyard Kipling, à qui je dois déjà les plus belles joies de l'esprit et qui remue toutes les fibres de mon cœur quand il célèbre la France comme l'amie de l'humanité. Les poètes de génie ont l'intuition de la vérité et Kipling a bien senti ce qui vit au cœur de mon pays, désormais ami du sien. Oui, Kipling, connaît mieux la France que les brouillons qui la gouvernent aujourd'hui. Nos hommes d'État si petits d'âme et d'esprit, ne connaissent pas du tout notre peuple dans sa profondeur. Ils connaissent les groupes politiques, ils connaissent le parlement, les comités électoraux, les gens d'affaires, et c'est toute leur connaissance. Ils n'ont nul soupçon de ce qui se passe dans l'esprit de l'ouvrier et du paysan. Le Ministère le plus impudent de tous est à cet égard aussi ignorant que les autres. Il ne soupçonne pas l'état d'âme des masses obscures. Et il y a bien paru, quand par une disposition illégale aussi inutile qu'odieuse, il a maintenu la classe sous les drapeaux et fomenté sans s'en douter, avec la plus criminelle imprudence, le plus redoutable antimilitarisme dans le peuple et dans l'armée. Les protestations spontanées des pauvres soldats l'ont surpris et épouvanté, et seul coupable de ces mutineries, il les a réprimées, par ses contes de guerre, avec une odieuse férocité. Eh! bien! les classes populaires—car il

y a des classes dans notre démocratie, comme il y en a en Angleterre, en Allemagne, en Russie—les classes populaires, ne tenant point au passé, n'en ont pas les idées, les passions, les croyances. Elles n'en ont pas les intérêts; elles n'en ont pas les sentiments. Elles vivent, pensent, se développent à l'insu des dirigeants. Eh! bien, ces classes sont pacifistes; elles sont en totalité pacifistes. Tous les ouvriers de la grande industrie, tout le prolétariat—il importe grandement de le savoir—est entièrement hostile à l'idée d'agression, de conquète, d'impérialisme. Elle est pénétrée de la maxime socialiste, "*l'union des travailleurs sera la paix du monde.*" Il serait dangereux de la réveiller trop brusquement de son rêve de concorde universelle. Je le dis parce que je le sais, parce que je le vois. J'ai maintes fois adjuré nos maîtres de s'en apercevoir. Mais ils n'ont ni cœur ni oreilles.

La vague nationaliste qui les apporta se retirera comme elle est venue, et la France restera, comme dit Rudyard Kipling, l'amie de l'humanité.

One Day More*

A Play in One Act

By Joseph Conrad

CAPTAIN HAGBERD (*a retired coasting skipper*).
JOSIAH CARVIL (*formerly a shipbuilder—a widower—blind*).
HARRY HAGBERD (*son of Captain Hagberd, who as a boy ran away from home*).
A LAMPLIGHTER.
BESSIE CARVIL (*daughter of Josiah Carvil*).

PLACE: *A small sea port.*

TIME: *The present—early autumn, towards dusk.*

SCENE REPRESENTS: *To right, two yellow brick cottages belonging to Captain Hagberd, one inhabited by himself, the other by the Carvils. A lamp-post in front. The red roofs of the town in the background. A sea-wall to left.*

SCENE I.

(*Curtain rises disclosing* CARVIL *and* BESSIE *moving away from sea-wall.* BESSIE *about twenty-five. Black dress; black straw hat. A lot of mahogany-coloured hair loosely done up. Pale face. Full figure. Very quiet.* CARVIL, *blind, unwieldy. Reddish whiskers; slow, deep voice produced without effort. Immovable, big face.*)

CARVIL (*Hanging heavily on* BESSIE'S *arm*). Careful! Go slow! (*Stops;* BESSIE *waits patiently.*) Want your poor blind father to break his neck? (*Shuffles on.*) In a hurry to get home and start that everlasting yarn with your chum the lunatic?

BESSIE. I am not in a hurry to get home, father.

CARVIL. Well, then, go steady with a poor blind man. Blind! Helpless! (*Strikes the ground with his stick.*) Never mind! I've had time to make enough money to have ham and eggs for breakfast every morning—thank God! And thank God, too, for it, girl. You haven't known a single hardship in all the

* This play, the only one that Mr. Conrad has written, has never been published, though it was performed in 1904 by the Stage Society, and also at the Theâtre de l'Œuvre, Paris.

days of your idle life. Unless you think that a blind, helpless father——

BESSIE. What is there for me to be in a hurry for?

CARVIL. What did you say?

BESSIE. I said there was nothing for me to hurry home for.

CARVIL. There is, tho'. To yarn with a lunatic. Anything to get away from your duty.

BESSIE. Captain Hagberd's talk never hurt you or anybody else.

CARVIL. Go on. Stick up for your only friend.

BESSIE. Is it my fault that I haven't another soul to speak to?

CARVIL (*Snarls*). It's mine, perhaps. Can I help being blind? You fret because you want to be gadding about—with a helpless man left all alone at home. Your own father too.

BESSIE. I haven't been away from you half a day since mother died.

CARVIL (*Viciously*). He's a lunatic, our landlord is. That's what he is. Has been for years—long before those damned doctors destroyed my sight for me. (*Growls angrily, then sighs.*)

BESSIE. Perhaps Captain Hagberd is not so mad as the town takes him for.

CARVIL (*Grimly*). Don't everybody know how he came here from the North to wait till his missing son turns up—here—of all places in the world. His boy that ran away to sea sixteen years ago and never did give a sign of life since! Don't I remember seeing people dodge round corners out of his way when he came along High Street. Seeing him, I tell you. (*Groan.*) He bothered everybody so with his silly talk of his son being sure to come back home—next year—next spring—next month—— What is it by this time, hey?

BESSIE. Why talk about it. He bothers no one now.

CARVIL. No. They've grown too fly. You've got only to pass a remark on his sail-cloth coat to make him shut up. All the town knows it. But he's got you to listen to his crazy talk whenever he chooses. Don't I hear you two at it, jabber, jabber, mumble, mumble——

BESSIE. What is there so mad in keeping up hope?

CARVIL (*Scathing scorn*). Not mad! Starving himself to lay money by—for that son. Filling his house with furniture he won't let anyone see—for that son. Advertising in the papers every week, these sixteen years—for that son. Not mad! Boy, he calls him. Boy Harry. His boy Harry. His lost boy Harry. Yah! Let him lose his sight to know what real trouble means. And the boy—the man, I should say—must 've been put away safe in Davy Jones's locker for many a year—drowned—food for fishes—dead. . . . Stands to reason, or he would have been here before, smelling around the old fool's money. (*Shakes* BESSIE's *arm slightly.*) Hey?

BESSIE. I don't know. May be.

CARVIL (*Bursting out*). Damme if I don't think he ever had a son.

BESSIE. Poor man. Perhaps he never had.

CARVIL. Ain't that mad enough for you? But I suppose you think it sensible.

BESSIE. What does it matter? His talk keeps him up.

CARVIL. Aye! And it pleases you. Anything to get away from your poor blind father. . . . Jabber, jabber—mumble, mumble—till I begin to think you must be as crazy as he is. What do you find to talk about, you two? What's your game?

(*During the scene* CARVIL *and* BESSIE *have crossed stage from L. to R. slowly with stoppages.*)

BESSIE. It's warm. Will you sit out for a while?

CARVIL (*Viciously*). Yes, I will sit out. (*Insistent.*) But what can be your game? What are you up to? (*They pass through garden gate.*) Because if it's his money you are after——

BESSIE. Father! How can you!

CARVIL (*Disregarding her*). To make you independent of your poor blind father, then you are a fool. (*Drops heavily on seat.*) He's too much of a miser to ever make a will—even if he weren't mad.

BESSIE. Oh! It never entered my head. I swear it never did.

CARVIL. Never did Hey! Then you are a still bigger fool. . . . I want to go to sleep! (*Takes off his hat, drops it on ground, and leans his head back against the wall.*)

BESSIE. And I have been a good daughter to you. Won't you say that for me?

CARVIL (*Very distinctly*). I want—to—go—to—sleep. I'm tired. (*Closes his eyes.*)

(*During that scene* CAPTAIN HAGBERD *has been seen hesitating at the back of stage, then running quickly to the door of his cottage. He puts inside a tin kettle (from under his coat), and comes down to the railing between the two gardens stealthily.*)

SCENE II.

CARVIL *seated.* BESSIE. CAPTAIN HAGBERD (*white beard, sail-cloth jacket*).

BESSIE (*Knitting*). You've been out this afternoon for quite a long time, haven't you?

CAPT. HAGBERD (*Eager*). Yes, my dear. (*Slily*) Of course you saw me come back.

BESSIE. Oh, yes. I did see you. You had something under your coat.

CAPT. *H.* (*Anxiously*). It was only a kettle, my dear. A tin water-kettle. I am glad I thought of it just in time. (*Winks, nods.*) When a husband gets back from his work he needs a lot of water for a wash. See? (*Dignified.*) Not that Harry 'll ever need to do a hand's turn after he comes home . . . (*Falters —casts stealthy glances on all sides*) . . . to-morrow.

BESSIE (*Looks up, grave*). Captain Hagberd, have you ever thought that perhaps your son will not . . .

CAPT. H. (*Paternally*). I've thought of everything, my dear—of everything a reasonable young couple may need for housekeeping. Why, I can hardly turn about in my room up there, the house is that full. (*Rubs his hands with satisfaction.*) For my son Harry—when he comes home. One day more.

BESSIE (*Flattering*). Oh, you are a great one for bargains. (CAPTAIN HAGBERD *delighted.*) But, Captain Hagberd—if—if—you don't know what may happen—if all that home you've got together were to be wasted—for nothing—after all. (*Aside.*) Oh, I can't bring it out.

CAPT. H. (*Agitated; flings arms up, stamps feet; stuttering*). What? What d'ye mean? What's going to happen to the things?

BESSIE (*Soothing*). Nothing! Nothing! Dust—or moth—you know. Damp, perhaps. You never let anyone into the house . . .

CAPT. H. Dust! Damp! (*Has a throaty, gurgling laugh.*) I light the fires and dust the things myself. (*Indignant.*) Let anyone into the house, indeed! What would Harry say! (*Walks up and down his garden hastily with tosses, flings, and jerks of his whole body.*)

BESSIE (*With authority*). Now, then, Captain Hagberd! You know I won't put up with your tantrums. (*Shakes finger at him.*)

CAPT. H. (*Subdued, but still sulky, with his back to her*). You want to see the things. That's what you're after. Well, no, not even you. Not till Harry has had his first look.

BESSIE. Oh, no! I don't. (*Relenting.*) Not till you're willing. (*Smiles at* CAPT. H., *who has turned half round already.*) You mustn't excite yourself. (*Knits.*)

CAPT. H. (*Condescending*). And you the only sensible girl for miles and miles around. Can't you trust me? I am a domestic man. Always was, my dear. I hated the sea. People don't know what they let their boys into when they send them to sea. As soon make convicts of them at once. What sort of life is it? Most of your time you don't know what's going on at home. (*Insinuating.*) There's nothing anywhere on earth as good as a home, my dear. (*Pause.*) With a good husband . . .

CARVIL (*Heard from his seat fragmentarily*). There they go . . . jabber, jabber . . . mumble, mumble. (*With a groaning effort.*) Helpless! (BESSIE *has glanced round at him.*)

CAPT. H. (*Mutters*). Extravagant ham and eggs fellow. (*Louder.*) Of course it isn't as if he had a son to make a home ready for. Girls are different, my dear. They don't run away, my dear, my dear. (*Agitated.*)

BESSIE (*Drops her arms wearily*). No, Captain Hagberd—they don't.

CAPT. H. (*Slowly*). I wouldn't let my own flesh and blood go to sea. Not I

BESSIE. And the boy ran away.

CAPT. H. (*A little vacantly*). Yes, my only son Harry. (*Rouses himself.*) Coming home to-morrow.

BESSIE (*Looks at him pityingly; speaks softly*). Sometimes, Captain Hagberd, a hope turns out false.

CAPT. H. (*Uneasy*). What's that got to do with Harry's coming back?

BESSIE. It's good to hope for something. But suppose now—— (*Feeling her way.*) Yours is not the only lost son that's never . . .

CAPT. H. Never what! You don't believe he's drowned. (*Crouches, glaring and grasping the rails.*)

BESSIE (*Frightened, drops knitting*). Captain Hagberd—don't. (*Catches hold of his shoulders over the railings.*) Don't—my God! he's going out of his mind! (*Cries.*) I didn't mean it! I don't know.

CAPT. H. (*Has backed away. An affected burst of laughter.*) What nonsense. None of us Hagberds belonged to the sea. All farmers for hundreds of years. (*Paternal and cunning.*) Don't alarm yourself, my dear. The sea can't get us. Look at me! I didn't get drowned. Moreover, Harry ain't a sailor at all. And if he isn't a sailor, he's bound to come back—to-morrow.

BESSIE (*Has been facing him; murmurs*). No. I give it up. He scares me. (*Aloud, sharply.*) Then I would give up that advertising in the papers.

CAPT. H. (*Surprised and puzzled*). Why, my dear? Everybody does it. His poor mother and I have been advertising for years and years. But she was an impatient woman. She died.

BESSIE. If your son's coming, as—as you say—what's the good of that expense? You had better spend that half-crown on yourself. I believe you don't eat enough.

CAPT. H. (*Confused*). But it's the right thing to do. Look at the Sunday papers. Missing relatives on top page—all proper. (*Looks unhappy.*)

BESSIE (*Tartly*). Ah, well! I declare I don't know what you live on.

CAPT. H. Are you getting impatient, my dear? Don't get impatient—like my poor wife. If she'd only been patient she'd be here. Waiting—only one day more. (*Pleadingly.*) Don't be impatient, my dear.

BESSIE. I've no patience with you sometimes.

CAPT. H. (*Flash of lucidity*). Why? What's the matter? (*Sympathetic.*) You're tired out, my dear, that's what it is.

BESSIE. Yes, I am. Day after day. (*Stands listless, arms hanging down.*)

CAPT. H. (*Timidly*). House dull?

BESSIE (*Apathetic*). Yes.

CAPT. H. (*As before*). H'm. Wash, cook, scrub. Hey?

BESSIE (*As before*). Yes.

CAPT. H. (*Pointing stealthily at the sleeping* CARVIL). Heavy?

BESSIE (*In a dead voice*). Like a millstone.

(*A silence.*)

CAPT. H. (*Burst of indignation*). Why don't that extravagant fellow get you a servant?

BESSIE. I don't know.

CAPT. H. (*Cheerily*). Wait till Harry comes home. He'll get you one.

BESSIE (*Almost hysterical; laughs*). Why, Captain Hagberd, perhaps your son won't even want to look at me—when he comes home.

CAPT. H. (*In a great voice*). What! (*Quite low.*) The boy wouldn't dare. (*Rising choler.*) Wouldn't dare to refuse the only sensible girl for miles around. That stubborn jackanapes refuse to marry a girl like you! (*Walks about in a fury.*) You trust me, my dear, my dear, my dear. I'll make him. I'll—I'll—— (*Splutters.*) Cut him off with a shilling.

BESSIE. Hush! (*Severe.*) You mustn't talk like that. What's this? More of your tantrums?

CAPT. H. (*Quite humble*). No, no—this isn't my tantrums—when I don't feel quite well in my head. Only I can't stand this. . . . I've grown as fond of you as if you'd been the wife of my Harry already. And to be told—— (*Can't restrain himself; shouts.*) Jackanapes!

BESSIE. Sh——! Don't you worry! (*Wearily.*) I must give that up too, I suppose. (*Aloud.*) I didn't mean it, Captain Hagberd.

CAPT. H. It's as if I were to have two children to-morrow. My son Harry—and the only sensible girl—— Why, my dear, I couldn't get on without you. We two are reasonable together. The rest of the people in this town are crazy. The way they stare at you. And the grins—they're all on the grin. It makes me dislike to go out. (*Bewildered.*) It seems as if there was something wrong about—somewhere. My dear, is there anything wrong—you who are sensible . . .

BESSIE (*Soothingly tender*). No, no, Captain Hagberd. There is nothing wrong about you anywhere.

CARVIL (*Lying back*). Bessie! (*Sits up.*) Get my hat, Bessie. . . . Bessie, my hat. . . . Bessie. . . . Bessie. . . .

(*At the first sound* BESSIE *picks up and puts away her knitting. She walks towards him, picks up hat, puts it on his head.*)

Bessie, my . . . (*Hat on head; shouting stops.*)

BESSIE (*Quietly*). Will you go in, now?

CARVIL. Help me up. Steady. I'm dizzy. It's the thundery weather. An autumn thunderstorm means a bad gale. Very fierce—and sudden. There will be shipwrecks to-night on our coast.

(*Exit* BESSIE *and* CARVIL *through door of their cottage. It has fallen dusk.*)

CAPT. H. (*Picks up spade*). Extravagant fellow! And all this town is mad—perfectly mad. I found them out years ago. Thank God they don't come this way staring and grinning. I can't bear them. I'll never go again into that High Street. (*Agitated.*) Never, never, never. Won't need to after to-morrow. Never! (*Flings down spade in a passion.*)

(*While* HAGBERD *speaks, the bow window of the* CARVILS *is lit up, and* BESSIE *is seen settling her father in a big armchair. Pulls down blind. Enter* LAMPLIGHTER. CAPT. *H. picks up the spade and leans forward on it with both hands; very still, watching him light the lamp.*)

LAMPLIGHTER (*Jocular*). There! You will be able to dig by lamplight if the fancy takes you.

(*Exit* LAMPLIGHTER *to back.*)

CAPT. H. (*Disgusted*). Ough! The people here . . . (*Shudders.*)

LAMPLIGHTER'S VOICE (*Heard loudly beyond the cottages*). Yes, that's the way.

(*Enter* HARRY *from back.*)

SCENE III.

(CAPT. H. HARRY. *Later* BESSIE.)

HARRY HAGBERD (*thirty-one, tall, broad shoulders, shaven face, small moustache. Blue serge suit. Coat open. Grey flannel shirt without collar and tie. No waistcoat. Belt with buckle. Black, soft felt hat, wide-brimmed, worn crushed in the crown and a little on one side. Good nature, recklessness, some swagger in the bearing. Assured, deliberate walk with a heavy tread. Slight roll in the gait. Walks down. Stops, hands in pockets. Looks about. Speaks.*) This must be it. Can't see anything beyond. There's somebody. (*Walks up to* CAPT. HAGBERD'S *gate.*) Can you tell me . . . (*Manner*

changes. Leans elbow on gate.) Why, you must be Capt. Hagberd himself.

CAPT. H. (*In garden, both hands on spade, peering, startled*) Yes. I am.

HARRY (*Slowly*). You've been advertising in the papers for your son, I believe.

CAPT. H. (*Off his guard, nervous*). Yes. My only boy Harry. He's coming home to-morrow. (*Mumbles.*) For a permanent stay.

HARRY (*Surprised*). The devil he is! (*Change of tone.*) My word! You've grown a beard like Father Christmas himself.

CAPT. H. (*Impressively*). Go your way. (*Waves one hand loftily.*) What's that to you. Go your way. (*Agitated.*) Go your way.

HARRY. There, there. I am not trespassing in the street—where I stand—am I? Tell you what, I fancy there's something wrong about your news. Suppose you let me come in—for a quiet chat, you know.

CAPT. H. (*Horrified*). Let you—*you* come in!

HARRY (*Persuasive*). Because I could give you some real information about your son. The—very—latest—tip. If you care to hear.

CAPT. H. (*Explodes*). No! I don't care to hear. (*Begins to pace to and fro, spade on shoulder. Gesticulating with his other arm.*) Here's a fellow—a grinning town fellow, who says there's something wrong. (*Fiercely.*) I have got more information than you're aware of. I have all the information I want. I have had it for years—for years—for years—enough to last me till to-morrow! Let you come in, indeed! What would Harry say?

(BESSIE CARVIL *enters at door with a white wrap on her head and stands in her garden trying to see.*)

BESSIE. What's the matter?

CAPT. H. (*Beside himself*). An information fellow. (*Stumbles.*)

HARRY (*Putting out arm to steady him, gravely*). Here! Steady a bit! Seems to me somebody's been trying to get at you. (*Change of tone.*) Hullo! What's this rig you've got on? . . . Storm canvas coat, by George! (*He gives a big, throaty laugh.*) Well! You *are* a character!

CAPT. H. (*Daunted by the allusion, looks at coat*). I—I wear it for—for the time being. Till—till—to-morrow. (*Shrinks away, spade in hand, to door of his cottage.*)

BESSIE (*Advancing*). And what may you want, sir?

HARRY (*Turns to* BESSIE *at once; easy manner*). I'd like to know about this swindle that's going to be sprung on him. I didn't mean to startle the old man. You see, on my way here I dropped into a barber's to get a twopenny shave, and they

told me there that he was something of a character. He has been a character all his life.

BESSIE (*Very low, wondering*). What swindle?

CAPT. H. A grinning fellow! (*Makes sudden dash indoors with the spade. Door slams. Lock clicks. Affected gurgling laugh within.*)

SCENE IV.

(BESSIE *and* HARRY. *Later* CAPT. H. *from window.*)

HARRY (*After a short silence*). What on earth's upset him so? What's the meaning of all this fuss? He isn't always like that, is he?

BESSIE. I don't know who you are; but I may tell you that his mind has been troubled for years about an only son who ran away from home—a long time ago. Everybody knows that here.

HARRY (*Thoughtful*). Troubled—for years! (*Suddenly.*) Well, I am the son.

BESSIE (*Steps back*). You! . . . Harry!

HARRY (*Amused, dry tone*). Got hold of my name, eh? Been making friends with the old man?

BESSIE (*Distressed*). Yes . . . I . . . sometimes . . . (*Rapidly*). He's our landlord.

HARRY (*Scornfully*). Owns both them rabbit hutches, does he? Just a thing he'd be proud of. . . . (*Earnest.*) And now you had better tell me all about that chap who's coming to-morrow. Know anything of him? I reckon there's more than one in that little game. Come! Out with it. (*Chaffing.*) I don't take no . . . from women.

BESSIE (*Bewildered*). Oh! It's so difficult. . . . What had I better do? . . .

HARRY (*Good humoured*). Make a clean breast of it.

BESSIE (*Wildly to herself*). Impossible! (*Starts.*) You don't understand. I must think—see—try to—I, I must have time. Plenty of time.

HARRY. What for? Come. Two words. And don't be afraid for yourself. I ain't going to make it a police job. But it's the other fellow that'll get upset when he least expects it. There'll be some fun when he shows his mug here to-morrow. (*Snaps fingers.*) I don't care that for the old man's dollars, but right is right. You shall see me put a head on that coon, whoever he is.

BESSIE (*Wrings hands slightly*). What had I better do? (*Suddenly to* HARRY.) It's you—you yourself that we—that he's waiting for. It's *you* who are to come to-morrow.

HARRY (*Slowly*). Oh! it's me! (*Perplexed.*) There's something there I can't understand. I haven't written ahead or any-

thing. It was my chum who showed me the advertisement with the old boy's address, this very morning—in London.

BESSIE (*Anxious*). How can I make it plain to you without . . . (*Bites her lip, embarrassed.*) Sometimes he talks so strangely.

HARRY (*Expectant*). Does he? What about?

BESSIE. Only you. And he will stand no contradicting.

HARRY. Stubborn. Eh? The old man hasn't changed much from what I can remember. (*They stand looking at each other helplessly.*)

BESSIE. He's made up his mind you would come back . . . to-morrow.

HARRY. I can't hang about here till morning. Got no money to get a bed. Not a cent. But why won't to-day do?

BESSIE. Because you've been too long away.

HARRY (*With force*). Look here, they fairly drove me out. Poor mother nagged at me for being idle, and the old man said he would cut my soul out of my body rather than let me go to sea.

BESSIE (*Murmurs*). He can bear no contradicting.

HARRY (*Continuing*). Well, it looked as tho' he would do it too. So I went. (*Moody.*) It seems to me sometimes I was born to them by a mistake . . . in that other rabbit hutch of a house.

BESSIE (*A little mocking*). And where do you think you ought to have been born by rights?

HARRY. In the open—upon a beach—on a windy night.

BESSIE (*Faintly*). Ah!

HARRY. They were characters, both of them, by George! Shall I try the door?

BESSIE. Wait. I must explain to you why it is to-morrow.

HARRY. Aye. That you must, or . . .

(*Window in* H.'s *cottage runs up.*)

CAPT. H.'s VOICE (*Above*). A—grinning—information—fellow coming to worry me in my own garden! What next?

(*Window rumbles down.*)

BESSIE. Yes. I must. (*Lays hand on* HARRY'S *sleeve.*) Let's get further off. Nobody ever comes this way after dark.

HARRY (*Careless laugh*). Aye. A good road for a walk with a girl.

(*They turn their backs on audience and move up the stage slowly. Close together.* HARRY *bends his head over* BESSIE.)

BESSIE'S VOICE (*Beginning eagerly*). People here somehow did not take kindly to him.

HARRY'S VOICE. Aye. Aye. I understand that.

(They walk slowly back towards the front.)

BESSIE. He was almost ready to starve himself for your sake.

HARRY. And I had to starve more than once for his whim.

BESSIE. I'm afraid you've a hard heart. *(Remains thoughtful.)*

HARRY. What for? For running away? *(Indignant.)* Why, he wanted to make a blamed lawyer's clerk of me.

(From here this scene goes on mainly near and about the street lamp.)

BESSIE *(Rousing herself)*. What are you? A sailor?

HARRY. Anything you like. *(Proudly.)* Sailor enough to be worth my salt on board any craft that swims the seas.

BESSIE. He will never, never believe it. He mustn't be contradicted.

HARRY. Always liked to have his own way. And you've been encouraging him.

BESSIE *(Earnestly)*. No!—not in everything—not really!

HARRY *(Vexed laugh)*. What about that pretty to-morrow notion? I've a hungry chum in London—waiting for me.

BESSIE *(Defending herself)*. Why should I make the poor old friendless man miserable? I thought you were far away. I thought you were dead. I didn't know but you had never been born. I . . . I . . . (HARRY *turns to her. She desperately.*) It was easier to believe it myself. *(Carried away.)* And after all it's true. It's come to pass. This is the to-morrow we've been waiting for.

HARRY *(Half perfunctorily)*. Aye. Anybody can see that your heart is as soft as your voice.

BESSIE *(As if unable to keep back the words)*. I didn't think you would have noticed my voice.

HARRY *(Already inattentive)*. H'm. Dashed scrape. This is a queer to-morrow, without any sort of to-day, as far as I can see. *(Resolutely.)* I must try the door.

BESSIE. Well—try, then.

HARRY *(From gate looking over shoulder at* BESSIE). He ain't likely to fly out at me, is he? I would be afraid of laying my hands on him. The chaps are always telling me I don't know my own strength.

BESSIE *(In front)*. He's the most harmless creature that ever . . .

HARRY. You wouldn't say so if you had seen him walloping me with a hard leather strap. *(Walking up garden.)* I haven't forgotten it in sixteen long years. *(Rat-tat-tat twice.)* Hallo, Dad. (BESSIE *intensely expectant. Rat-tat-tat.*) Hullo, Dad

—let me in. I am your own Harry. Straight. Your son Harry come back home—a day too soon.

(*Window above rumbles up.*)

CAPT. H. (*Seen leaning out, aiming with spade*). Aha!

BESSIE (*Warningly*). Look out, Harry! (*Spade falls.*) Are you hurt? (*Window rumbles down.*)

HARRY (*In the distance*). Only grazed my hat.

BESSIE. Thank God! (*Intensely.*) What'll he do now?

HARRY (*Comes forward, slamming gate behind him*). Just like old times. Nearly licked the life out of me for wanting to go away, and now I come back he shies a confounded old shovel at my head. (*Fumes. Laughs a little.*) I wouldn't care, only poor little Ginger—Ginger's my chum up in London—he will starve while I walk back all the way from here. (*Faces* BESSIE *blankly.*) I spent my last twopence on a shave. . . . Out of respect for the old man.

BESSIE. I think, if you let me, I could manage to talk him round in a week, maybe.

(*A muffled periodical bellowing had been heard faintly for some time.*)

HARRY (*On the alert*). What's this? Who's making this row? Hark! Bessie, Bessie. It's in your house, I believe.

BESSIE (*Without stirring, drearily*). It's for me.

HARRY (*Discreetly, whispering*). Good voice for a ship's deck in a squall. Your husband? (*Steps out of lamplight.*)

BESSIE. No. My father. He's blind. (*Pause.*) I'm not married.

(*Bellowings grow louder.*)

HARRY. Oh, I say. What's up? Who's murdering him?

BESSIE (*Calmly*). I expect he's finished his tea. (*Bellowing continues regularly.*)

HARRY. Hadn't you better see to it? You'll have the whole town coming out here presently. (BESSIE *moves off.*) I say! (*Bessie stops.*) Couldn't you scare up some bread and butter for me from that tea? I'm hungry. Had no breakfast.

BESSIE (*Starts off at the word "hungry," dropping to the ground the white woollen shawl*). I won't be a minute. Don't go away.

HARRY (*Alone; picks up shawl absently, and, looking at it spread out in his hands, pronounces slowly*). A—dam'—silly—scrape. (*Pause. Throws shawl on arm. Strolls up and down. Mutters.*) No money to get back. (*Louder.*) Silly little Ginger 'll think I've got hold of the pieces and given an old shipmate the go by. One good shove—(*Makes motion of bursting in door with his shoulders*)—would burst that door in—I bet. (*Looks about.*) I wonder where the nearest bobby is!

No. They would want to bundle me neck and crop into chokey. (*Shudders.*) Perhaps. It makes me dog sick to think of being locked up. Haven't got the nerve. Not for prison. (*Leans against lamp-post.*) And not a cent for my fare. I wonder if that girl now . . .

BESSIE (*Coming hastily forward, plate with bread and meat in hand*). I didn't take time to get anything else. . . .

HARRY (*Begins to eat*). You're not standing treat to a beggar. My dad is a rich man—you know.

BESSIE (*Plate in hand*). You resemble your father.

HARRY. I was the very image of him in face from a boy—(*Eats*)—and that's about as far as it goes. He was always one of your domestic characters. He looked sick when he had to go to sea for a fortnight's trip. (*Laughs.*) He was all for house and home.

BESSIE. And you? Have you never wished for a home? (*Goes off with empty plate and puts it down hastily on* CARVIL'S *bench—out of sight.*)

HARRY (*Left in front*). Home! If I found myself shut up in what the old man calls a home, I would kick it down about my ears on the third day—or else go to bed and die before the week was out. Die in a house—ough!

BESSIE (*Returning; stops and speaks from garden railing*). And where is it that you would wish to die?

HARRY. In the bush, in the sea, on some blamed mountain-top for choice. No such luck, tho', I suppose.

BESSIE (*From distance*). Would that be luck?

HARRY. Yes! For them that make the whole world their home.

BESSIE (*Comes forward shyly*). The world's a cold home—they say.

HARRY (*A little gloomy*). So it is. When a man's done for.

BESSIE. You see! (*Taunting.*) And a ship's not so very big after all.

HARRY. No. But the sea is great. And then what of the ship! You love her and leave her, Miss—Bessie's your name—isn't it? . . . I like that name.

BESSIE. You like my name! I wonder you remembered it. . . . That's why, I suppose.

HARRY (*Slight swagger in voice*). What's the odds! As long as a fellow has lived. And a voyage isn't a marriage—as we sailors say.

BESSIE. So you're not married—(*Movement of* HARRY)—to any ship.

HARRY (*Soft laugh*). Ship! I've loved and left more of them than I can remember. I've been nearly everything you can think of but a tinker or a soldier; I've been a boundary rider; I've sheared sheep and humped my swag and harpooned a whale; I've rigged ships and skinned dead bullocks and

prospected for gold—and turned my back on more money than the old man would have scraped together in his whole life.

BESSIE (*Thoughtfully*). I could talk him over in a week. . . .

HARRY (*Negligently*). I dare say you could. (*Joking.*) I don't know but what I could make shift to wait if you only promise to talk to me now and then. I've grown quite fond of your voice. I like a right woman's voice.

BESSIE (*Averted head*). Quite fond. (*Sharply.*) Talk! Nonsense! Much you'd care. (*Business-like.*) Of course I would have to sometimes. . . . (*Thoughtful again.*) Yes. In a week—if—if only I knew you would try to get on with him afterwards.

HARRY (*Leaning against lamp-post; growls through his teeth*).. More humouring. Ah! well, no! (*Hums significantly.*)

Oh, oh, oh, Rio, . . .
And fare thee well
My bonnie young girl,
We're bound for Rio Grande.

BESSIE (*Shivering*). What's this?

HARRY. Why! The chorus of an up-anchor tune. Kiss and go. A deep-water ship's good-bye. . . . You are cold. Here's that thing of yours I've picked up and forgot there on my arm. Turn round a bit. So. (*Wraps her up—commanding.*) Hold the ends together in front.

BESSIE (*Softly*). A week is not so very long.

HARRY (*Begins violently*). You think that I—— (*Stops with sidelong look at her.*) I can't dodge about in ditches and live on air and water. Can I? I haven't any money—you know.

BESSIE. He's been scraping and saving up for years. All he has is for you, and perhaps . . .

HARRY (*Interrupts*). Yes. If I come to sit on it like a blamed toad in a hole. Thank you.

BESSIE (*Angrily*). What did you come for, then?

HARRY (*Promptly*). For five quid—(*Pause.*)—after a jolly good spree.

BESSIE (*Scathingly*). You and that—that—chum of yours have been drinking.

HARRY (*Laughs*). Don't fly out, Miss Bessie—dear. Ginger's not a bad little chap. Can't take care of himself, tho'. Blind three days. (*Serious.*) Don't think I am given that way. Nothing and nobody can get over me unless I like. I can be as steady as a rock.

BESSIE (*Murmurs*). Oh! I don't think you are bad.

HARRY (*Approvingly*). You're right there. (*Impulsive.*) Ask the girls all over—— (*Checks himself.*) Ginger, he's long-headed, too, in his way—mind you. He sees the paper this morning, and says he to me, 'Hallo! Look at that, Harry—

loving parent—that's five quid sure.' So we scraped all our pockets for the fare. . . .

BESSIE (*Unbelieving*). You came here for that.

HARRY (*Surprised*). What else would I want here? Five quid isn't much to ask for—once in sixteen years. (*Through his teeth with a sidelong look at* B.) And now I am ready to go—for my fare.

BESSIE (*Clasping her hands*). Whoever heard a man talk like this before! I can't believe you mean it.

HARRY. What? That I would go? You just try and see.

BESSIE (*Disregarding him*). Don't you care for anyone? Didn't you ever want anyone in the world to care for you?

HARRY. In the world! (*Boastful.*) There's hardly a place you can go in the world where you wouldn't find somebody that did care for Harry Hagberd. (*Pause.*) I'm not of the sort that go about skulking under false names.

BESSIE. Somebody—that means a woman.

HARRY. Well! And if it did.

BESSIE (*Unsteadily*). Oh, I see how it is. You get round them with your soft speeches, your promises, and then . . .

HARRY (*Violently*). *Never!*

BESSIE (*Startled, steps back*). Ah—you never . . .

HARRY (*Calm*). Never yet told a lie to a woman.

BESSIE. What lie?

HARRY. Why, the lie that comes glib to a man's tongue. None of that for me. I leave the sneaking off to them soft-spoken chaps you're thinking of. No! If you love me you take me. And if you take me—why, then, the capstan-song of deep-water ships is sure to settle it all some fine day.

BESSIE (*After a short pause, with effort*). It's like your ships, then.

HARRY (*Amused*). Exactly, up to now. Or else I wouldn't be here in a silly fix.

BESSIE (*Assumed indifference*). Perhaps it's because you've never yet met—— (*Voice fails.*)

HARRY (*Negligently*). Maybe. And perhaps never shall. . . . What's the odds? It's the looking for a thing. . . . No matter. I love them all—ships and women. The scrapes they got me into, and the scrapes they got me out of—my word! I say, Miss Bessie, what are you thinking of?

BESSIE (*Lifts her head*). That you are supposed never to tell a lie.

HARRY. Never, eh? You wouldn't be that hard on a chap.

BESSIE (*Recklessly*). Never to a woman, I mean.

HARRY. Well, no. (*Serious.*) Never anything that matters. (*Aside.*) I don't seem to get any nearer to my railway fare. (*Leans wearily against the lamp-post with a far-off look.* B. *to l. looks at him.*)

BESSIE. Now what are *you* thinking of?

HARRY (*Turns his head; stares at* B.). Well, I was thinking what a fine figure of a girl you are.

BESSIE (*Looks away a moment*). Is that true, or is it only one of them that don't matter?

HARRY (*Laughing a little*). No! no! That's true. Haven't you ever been told that before? The men . . .

BESSIE. I hardly speak to a soul from year's end to year's end. Father's blind. He don't like strangers, and he can't bear to think of me out of his call. Nobody comes near us much.

HARRY (*Absent-minded*). Blind—ah! of course.

BESSIE. For years and years . . .

HARRY (*Commiserating*). For years and years. In one of them hutches. You are a good daughter. (*Brightening up.*) A fine girl altogether. You seem the sort that makes a good chum to a man in a fix. And there's not a man in this whole town who found you out? I can hardly credit it, Miss Bessie. (B. *shakes her head.*) Man I said! (*Contemptuous.*) A lot of tame rabbits in hutches I call them. . . . (*Breaks off.*) I say, when's the last train up to London? Can you tell me?

BESSIE (*Gazes at him steadily*). What for? You've no money.

HARRY. That's just it. (*Leans back against post again.*) Hard luck. (*Insinuating.*) But there was never a time in all my travels that a woman of the right sort did not turn up to help me out of a fix. I don't know why. It's perhaps because they know without telling that I love them all. (*Playful.*) I've almost fallen in love with you, Miss Bessie.

BESSIE (*Unsteady laugh*). Why! How you talk! You haven't even seen my face properly. (*One step towards H., as if compelled.*)

HARRY (*Bending forward gallantly*). A little pale. It suits some. (*Puts out his hand, catches hold of* B.'s *arm. Draws her to him.*) Let's see. . . . Yes, it suits *you.* (*It's a moment before* B. *puts up her hands, palms out, and turns away her head.*)

BESSIE (*Whispering*). Don't. (*Struggles a little. Released, stands averted.*)

HARRY. No offence. (*Stands, back to audience, looking at* H.'s *cottage.*)

BESSIE (*Alone in front; faces audience; whispers*). My voice —my figure—my heart—my face. . . .

(*A silence.* B.'s *face gradually lights up. Directly* H. *speaks, expression of hopeful attention.*)

HARRY (*From railings*). The old man seems to have gone to sleep waiting for that to-morrow of his.

BESSIE. Come away. He sleeps very little.

HARRY (*Strolls down*). He has taken an everlasted jamming

hitch round the whole business. (*Vexed.*) Cast it loose who may. (*Contemptuous exclamation.*) To-morrow. Pooh! It'll be just another mad to-day.

BESSIE. It's the brooding over his hope that's done it. People teased him so. It's his fondness for you that's troubled his mind.

HARRY. Aye. A confounded shovel on the head. The old man had always a queer way of showing his fondness for me.

BESSIE. A hopeful, troubled, expecting old man—left alone—all alone.

HARRY (*Lower tone*). Did he ever tell you what mother died of?

BESSIE. Yes. (*A little bitter.*) From impatience.

HARRY (*Makes a gesture with his arm; speaks vaguely but with feeling*). I believe you have been very good to my old man. . . .

BESSIE (*Tentative*). Wouldn't you try to be a son to him?

HARRY (*Angrily*). No contradicting; is that it? You seem to know my dad pretty well. And so do I. He's dead nuts on having his own way—and I've been used to have my own too long. It's the deuce of a fix.

BESSIE. How could it hurt you not to contradict him for a while—and perhaps in time you would get used . . .

HARRY (*Interrupts sulkily*). I ain't accustomed to knuckle under. There's a pair of us. Hagberds both. I ought to be thinking of my train.

BESSIE (*Earnestly*). Why? There's no need. Let us get away up the road a little.

HARRY (*Through his teeth*). And no money for the fare. (*Looks up.*) Sky's come overcast. Black, too. It'll be a wild, windy night . . . to walk the high road on. But I and wild nights are old friends wherever the free wind blows.

BESSIE (*Entreating*). No need. No need. (*Looks apprehensively at Hagberd's cottage. Takes a couple of steps up as if to draw Harry further off. Harry follows. Both stop.*)

HARRY (*After waiting*). What about this to-morrow whim?

BESSIE. Leave that to me. Of course all his fancies are not mad. They aren't. (*Pause.*) Most people in this town would think what he had set his mind on quite sensible. If he ever talks to you of it, don't contradict him. It would—it would be dangerous.

HARRY (*Surprised*). What would he do?

BESSIE. He would—I don't know—something rash.

HARRY (*Startled*). To himself?

BESSIE. No. It'd be against you—I fear.

HARRY (*Sullen*). Let him.

BESSIE. Never. Don't quarrel. But perhaps he won't even try to talk to you of it. (*Thinking aloud.*) Who knows what I can do with him in a week! I can, I can, I can—I must.

HARRY. Come—what's this sensible notion of his that I mustn't quarrel about?

BESSIE (*Turns to* HARRY, *calm, forcible*). If I make him once see that you've come back, he will be as sane as you or I. All his mad notions will be gone. But that other is quite sensible. And you mustn't quarrel over it.

(*Moves up to back of stage.* HARRY *follows a little behind, away from audience.*)

HARRY'S VOICE (*Calm*). Let's hear what it is.

(*Voices cease. Action visible as before.* HARRY *steps back and walks hastily down.* BESSIE, *at his elbow, follows with her hands clasped.*)

(*Loud burst of voice.*)

HARRY (*Raving to and fro*). No! Expects me—a home. Who wants his home? . . . What I want is hard work, or an all-fired racket, or more room than there is in the whole of England. Expects me! A man like me—for his rotten money—there ain't enough money in the world to turn me into a blamed tame rabbit in a hutch. (*He stops suddenly before* BESSIE, *arms crossed on breast. Violently.*) Don't you see it?

BESSIE (*Terrified, stammering faintly*). Yes. Yes. Don't look at me like this. (*Sudden scream.*) Don't quarrel with him. He's mad!

HARRY (*Headlong utterance*). Mad! Not he. He likes his own way. Tie me up by the neck here. Here! Ha! Ha! Ha! (*Louder.*) And the whole world is not a bit too big for me to spread my elbows in, I can tell you—what's your name—Bessie. (*Rising scorn.*) Marry! Wants me to marry and settle. . . . (*Scathingly.*) And as likely as not he has looked out the girl too—dash my soul. Talked to you about it—did he? And do you happen to know the Judy—may I ask?

(*Window in* HAGBERD'S *cottage runs up. They start and stand still.*)

CAPT. H. (*Above, begins slowly*). A grinning information fellow from a crazy town. (*Voice changes.*) Bessie, I see you. . . .

BESSIE (*Shrill*). Captain Hagberd! Say nothing. You don't understand. For heaven's sake don't.

CAPT. H.: Send him away this minute, or I will tell Harry. They know nothing of Harry in this crazy town. Harry's coming home to-morrow. Do you hear? One day more!

(*Silence.*)

HARRY (*Mutters*). Well!—he *is* a character.

CAPT. H. (*Chuckles softly*). Never you fear! The boy shall marry you. (*Sudden anger.*) He'll have to. I'll make him.

Or, if not—(*Furious*)—I'll cut him off with a shilling, and leave everything to you. Jackanapes! Let him starve!

(*Window rumbles down.*)

HARRY (*Slowly*). So it's you—the girl. It's you! Now I begin to see. . . . By heavens, you have a heart as soft as your woman's voice.

BESSIE (*Half averted, face in hands*). You see! Don't come near me.

HARRY (*Makes a step towards her*). I must have another look at your pale face.

BESSIE (*Turns unexpectedly and pushes him with both hands;* HARRY *staggers back and stands still;* BESSIE, *fiercely*). Go away.

HARRY (*Watching her*). Directly. But women always had to get me out of my scrapes. I am a beggar now, and you must help me out of my scrape.

BESSIE (*Who at the word "beggar" had begun fumbling in the pocket of her dress, speaks wildly*). Here it is. Take it. Don't look at me. Don't speak to me!

HARRY (*Swaggers up under the lamp; looks at coin in his palm*). Half-a-quid. . . . My fare!

BESSIE (*Hands clenched*). Why are you still here?

HARRY. Well, you *are* a fine figure of a girl. My word. I've a good mind to stop—for a week.

BESSIE (*Pain and shame*). Oh! . . . What are you waiting for? If I had more money I would give it all, all. I would give everything I have to make you go—to make you forget you had ever heard my voice and seen my face. (*Covers face with hands.*)

HARRY (*Sombre, watches her*). No fear! I haven't forgotten a single one of you in the world. Some've given me more than money. No matter. You can't buy me in—and you can't buy yourself out . . .

(*Strides towards her. Seizes her arms. Short struggle.* BESSIE *gives way. Hair falls loose.* H. *kisses her forehead, cheeks, lips, then releases her.* BESSIE *staggers against railings.*)

(*Exit* HARRY; *measured walk without haste.*)

BESSIE (*Staring eyes, hair loose, back against railings; calls out*). Harry! (*Gathers up her skirts and runs a little way.*) Come back, Harry. (*Staggers forward against lamp-post.*) Harry! (*Much lower.*) Harry! (*In a whisper.*) Take me with you. (*Begins to laugh, at first faintly, then louder.*)

(*Window rumbles up, and* CAPT. H.'S *chuckle mingles with* BESSIE'S *laughter, which abruptly stops.*)

CAPT. H. (*Goes on chuckling; speaks cautiously*). Is he gone

yet, that information fellow? Do you see him anywhere, my dear?

BESSIE (*Low and stammering*). N-no, no! (*Totters away from lamp-post.*) I don't see him.

CAPT. H. (*Anxious*). A grinning vagabond, my dear. Good girl. It's you who drove him away. Good girl.

(*Stage gradually darkens.*)

BESSIE. Go in; be quiet! You have done harm enough.

CAPT. H. (*Alarmed*). Why. Do you hear him yet, my dear?

BESSIE (*Sobs, drooping against the railings*). No! No! I don't. I don't hear him any more.

CAPT. H. (*Triumphant*). Now we shall be all right, my dear, till our Harry comes home to-morrow. (*Affected gurgling laugh.*)

BESSIE (*Distracted*). Be quiet. Shut yourself in. You will make me mad. (*Losing control of herself, repeats with rising inflexion*) You make me mad. (*With despair.*) There is no to-morrow! (*Sinks to ground near middle railings. Low sobs.*)

(*Stage darkens perceptibly.*)

CAPT. H. (*Above, in a voice suddenly dismayed and shrill*). What! What do you say, my dear? No to-morrow? (*Broken, very feebly.*) No—to-morrow? (*Window runs down.*)

CARVIL (*Heard within, muffled bellowing*). Bessie—Bessie—Bessie—Bessie—— (*At the first call Bessie springs up and begins to stumble blindly towards the door. A faint flash of lightning, followed by a very low rumble of thunder.*) You!—Bessie!

CURTAIN.

In Front of the Guillotine*

By Ivan Turguenev

(Translated by Margaret Gough)

In January, 1870, I was dining in Paris with one of my greatest friends, when M. Maxime du Camp suddenly asked me if I would care to see Troppman beheaded, offering, at the same time, to include me among the privileged few who were allowed to enter the prison. The crime committed by this notorious assassin is not yet forgotten; at the time I am writing of, Paris thought of nothing else but Troppman, even to the exclusion of the nomination of Olivier, the pseudo-Parliamentarian, and the murder of Victor Noir by Prince Bonaparte, whose acquittal caused a universal scandal.

In every newsagent's window were rows of photographs of *The Celebrated Pantin Murderer*, and they showed a young man with a high forehead, dark eyes, and thick lips.

Every evening for nearly a week, workmen, in their grimy blouses, stood at the Place de La Roquette, waiting for a glimpse of the guillotine, and it was not until after midnight that they turned away disappointed.

M. Maxime du Camp's invitation took me by surprise, and I accepted it without a thought, promising to be near the statue of Prince Eugene on the boulevard of that name at eleven o'clock. When the hour came I regretted having made the appointment, but it was too late to go back upon my word. I was held by a sense of shame; one might almost say that I was afraid. Perhaps to atone for my weakness, and in the hope that my observations may interest others, I will try to tell what I saw; I will try to evoke in my telling all the painful impressions of that night, and in this way I may gratify something more than the curiosity of the reader—he may reap some benefit from my tale.

* We believe we are right in saying that this famous story of Turguenev's has never before been published in English.

IN FRONT OF THE GUILLOTINE

II

When M. Maxime du Camp and myself arrived at the statue of Prince Eugene, several people were waiting there for us. Among them was the celebrated chief of the Secret Police, M. Claude, to whom M. Maxime du Camp introduced me. The others, like myself, were invited guests, and the greater number were journalists and critics. M. du Camp told me that we would pass the night in the rooms of the Governor of the prison.

Executions in winter take place at seven o'clock in the morning, but it was necessary to be in our places before midnight; later it would be impossible for us to elbow our way through the dense crowd.

From Prince Eugene's statue to the prison was about five or six hundred yards. As far as our eyes could see there was nothing unusual happening, merely a little more animation than was customary on the boulevards; everybody was making for the one place, the women going at a little trot. The *cafés* and the taverns in the outlying suburbs were still open—an unusual thing at so late an hour. There was no fog, the night was very dark, damp though no rain was falling, and cold without being frosty; a true Parisian January night.

M. Maxime du Camp said it was time we were on our road, and we set out. He had the self-possession and the quiet manners of a man who attends to his own business, a man in whom executions awakened no other feeling except to get through his duty as quickly and as well as possible. M. Claude was a man about fifty, middle height, squat, and square shouldered, with a round head and the hair cropped close, and features as fine as a cameo. The forehead, the chin, and the nape were extraordinarily ample; an energy, an unshakable determination revealed itself in his even, dry voice, in his little pale grey eyes, in his stumpy, square fingers, in his muscular legs, in all his movements, firm and never hurried. It was said that he was very clever in his profession, and that he was the terror of thieves and murderers. Political crimes were not in his jurisdiction. His companion, M. G—, of whom M. Maxime du Camp had spoken to me very often, had more refined manners and a soft and sentimental air.

With the exception of these two gentlemen, and perhaps also M. Maxime du Camp, we felt very ill at ease, a little ashamed of being where we were, and we walked like men out for a day's shooting—in single file.

The nearer we approached la Roquette the more people we found; still, there was not yet what one could call a crowd. We did not hear any cries, not even noisy conversation; "the play" had not yet begun. Some urchins aired themselves in the square; their hands in their pockets, the peak of their caps on their noses, they walked with that slouching and elusive gait seen only in Paris, and which in the twinkling of an eye can be changed into the fleetest run with monkey-like bounds.

"There he is, there he is. That's him," cried several voices round us.

"Do you know," M. Maxime du Camp said, "that they take you for the executioner?"

"A promising beginning," I thought to myself.

The executioner of Paris—Monsieur de Paris—whose acquaintance was made some hours later, was the same height as myself, and had hair as white.

Then we saw before us a very long space, not too wide, bordered on each side by buildings resembling a barracks, smoke-stained and of hideous design. One was the prison for young offenders, the other, on the right, for the condemned.

III

In the centre of the square there were four lines of soldiers, and twenty paces from them were four more. It was unusual to see the military at an execution, but the murder of Victor Noir had excited the minds of the people to breaking-point, and the Government deemed the police insufficient to keep the crowd in order. Some sergeants were walking slowly to and forth before the principal door of the Prison de la Rouqette, which was in the middle of the square. A large and rather powerfully built officer, wearing an embroidered cap, threw himself on us with an impetuosity that reminded me of the police in my own country, and then quieted down as soon as he learnt who we were.

The prison door was opened just enough to let us

squeeze through, and we were admitted with great caution into the guard-house. A minute examination was followed by a long interrogation; the formalities ended we passed down a great courtyard, then a smaller one, and at last found ourselves in the Governor's apartments.

He was waiting there for us, a strongly built man of a great height, and with infantry officer stamped upon his face. He wore imperial moustaches, his nose was aquiline, his eyes were fixed, like a tiger's eyes, and his skull was small. But in spite of his great friendliness with which he received us, his every movement and his every word betrayed him to be no more than an instrument in his master's hands, one who would not hesitate to carry out any order, no matter how brutal. He had already proved his devotion on the night of the second of December, for it was he who, at the head of his battalion, had demolished the printing works of the *Moniteur*.

He very courteously gave up his rooms to us. They were on the second floor of the principal building; two very comfortably furnished rooms. A bright fire was burning, and a little greyhound with a sprained paw dragged herself slowly from one rug to another, wagging her tail all the time, her sad eyes fixed on us, and they seeming to say that she, too, knew she was a prisoner.

There were eight of us, and among my companions I recognised several from photographs: M. Sardou, M. Albert Wolf, &c., but I had no wish to speak to them. We sat down in the parlour, and M. Maxime du Camp went over to M. Claude. Troppman was the one subject of our conversation, the centre of our thoughts. The Governor told us that the condemned man had fallen asleep at nine o'clock, and was now sleeping peacefully—"the sleep of the just"—that he seemed to have known all the time that his appeal would be rejected, that he implored the Governor to tell him the truth, and that he persisted in declaring he had accomplices, but would not give their names. The Governor added that no doubt when the moment came Troppman would show some fear, but at present he had a very good appetite. He had not asked for any books.

From our side of the room came the question if any reliance could be placed on the words of a criminal who had shown himself to be a downright liar. The murder in

all its details was gone over again; someone asked if the phrenologist had expressed any opinion about Troppman's head; another touched on the question of the death penalty, but the conversation flagged, commonplace topics were introduced indifferently, and on the least pretext someone interrupted, and no attempt was made to take up the conversation again. It was impossible to speak of anything else except the events of the night, partly out of an involuntary respect of death, and partly out of respect for the human being who was to undergo it. A vague feeling of unrest weighed upon us; we were not bored, but there was an indefinable uneasiness, a devouring anxiety that was a hundred times less bearable than boredom. It seemed as if the night would never end.

As for myself, I was conscious only of one thing; I had no right to be where I was at that hour, my presence in the place could not be justified in any way, psychological or moral. M. Claude came into the room after a short absence and began to explain to us how the famous Jud had slipped through his fingers, but he never gave up hope of catching him, he said, if he were still alive.

Suddenly a dull rattle of wheels was heard; a moment after we were told that the guillotine had arrived, and we rushed into the street as if afraid we might miss seeing it.

IV

In front of the prison door was a huge closed van, to which was harnessed three horses; another van, smaller and lower, like a long box on two wheels followed a little behind. (We learnt afterwards that the body was placed in this van immediately after the execution and taken to the graveyard.)

Several workmen in blouses were gathered about the vehicle, and a tall man wearing a round hat, a white tie, and a light overcoat thrown over one shoulder gave his orders in a low voice. This was the executioner, and all the authorities, M. Maxime du Camp, M. Claude, the Governor, and the officer in the embroidered cap, exchanged greetings with him.

"Ah, M. *Indric*, good evening, M. *Indric*. (His real name was Heidenreich; he was an Alsatian.)

We also went towards him, and he became for the moment the object of general attention. The manner in which we accosted him said plainly: "We'll make no small fuss of you, for you are an important person"; and some, no doubt to be a little more *chic* than the rest, shook his hand, which was of a remarkable whiteness and beauty.

M. Indric had very simple manners, but one could see that he was aware that, for that evening at least, after Troppman, he was the most interesting person to us. He was Troppman's Prime Minister.

The workmen opened the van, took out the different pieces of the guillotine, and started to put it up about fifteen paces from the prison door; and we watched two lanterns, one before and one behind, moving close to the ground, lighting up in little patches the facetted stones of the pavement.

I looked at my watch; it was half past twelve. The air had become colder and darker. Already there was a goodly number of sightseers, and from behind the files of soldiers which surrounded the square in front of the prison there rose a long and indistinguishable murmur of human voices.

I went towards the soldiers; they remained motionless, a litte wedged together, the symmetry of their line slightly broken. Their faces expressed nothing but boredom, a resigned and dutiful boredom, and the same expression, mingled with a vague smile of expectation, was upon all the faces that I could catch sight of between the helmets, the uniforms of the soldiers, and the three-cornered hats and tunics of the sergeants.

Further away the crowd swayed and jostled, and from time to time a clear cry came from it:

"*Ohé Troppman! Ohé Lambert! Fallait pas qu'y aille!*"*

Then followed some hissing, elbowing, and quarrels about places.

The refrain of a ribald song slid from mouth to mouth; all of a sudden a piercing laugh rang out, it created a clamour, and then followed a noise as if thousands of geese were beating and dabbling their wings in a puddle. "The real show" had not yet begun; nowhere could there be

* Evidently a catch-word of the period.

heard the antidynastic cries for which everybody waited, nor the tempestuous roll of the "Marseillaise."

I went towards the guillotine which was now finished. A man with an attractive face, curled hair, and wearing a soft grey hat, a barrister if I am not mistaken, discoursed with vehemence and a monotonous gesture. Pointing his index finger, beating time, he bent his knees at every emphasis as if overcome by the weight of his conviction. He wished to prove to two men standing near by that Troppman was not a murderer, but a madman.

"A madman, and I'll prove it to you. Do you see my point?" he cried. "His motive was not murder, but an exaggerated pride. Do you see my point?"

The men saw his point, but to judge from their faces they were not convinced, and a workman from the top of the guillotine looked down on him with an undisguised contempt.

I turned again and went to the Governor's room.

V

Several of my companions were already there; our amiable host was handing round mulled claret.

Troppman remained the subject of our conversation. It was asked if he were beginning to realise that his time was growing shorter, if the uproar in the street reached his cell in spite of the thickness of the walls which separated him from it, if he were still asleep.

The Governor showed us a pile of letters, all addressed to Troppman, and which the condemned man refused to open; on that point we were assured by our host. The letters were for the most part full of trivial pleasantries or conundrums; a smaller number were serious, and conjured him to declare his crime and to repent; a Methodist minister sent him a theological dissertation of about twenty pages; there were some notes in women's handwriting, and bunches of daisies and *immortelles*. The Governor told us that the prison apothecary had handed the authorities a letter which Troppman had found means of sending to him, asking for poison. In spite of our host's affability,

it was plain to see that he could not understand why the devil we should be so much interested in a wicked and callous brute like Troppman, and that he regarded us as merely dandies in quest of emotions.

Having chatted a little while, we dispersed again. The night passed in wandering about like weary spirits, going to the Governor's room, sitting side by side in his parlour, asking news of Troppman, into the street again, back to the room again a few minutes later to continue our conversation about the prisoner, and so on till morning. Some amongst us began to tell indecent stories, one news about himself, others spoke a little of politics, of the theatre, of Victor Noir; several attempted to be funny, but all these attempts only produced a forced laugh which sounded false and fell very flat.

In the inner room I discovered a little sofa, and stretching myself on it as well as I could, I tried to go to sleep; but not even for a few minutes could I get a doze. Towards three o'clock M. Claude came in, sat down, and went fast asleep; a few minutes after, one of his subordinates called him; he got up immediately and disappeared.

Outside the noise of the crowd became louder, denser, more continuous; the square now held about twenty-five thousand people, and listening to the roar it seemed as if I were listening to the roar of the sea when the waves are breaking on the shore; the same interminable crescendo of waves that Wagner has rendered so wonderfully in his music. The noise was not always sustained; there were loud tumults, convulsions, and over these the thin sounds of women's and children's voices rose and fell, just as the waves gush in fine spray over the deafening clangour. It was as if one were in the presence of a brutal elemental force. Sometimes this element was appeased, seemed to pause; then it gathered itself up, rising, rising, until at last it threw itself forward with redoubled fury, as if wishing to envelop everything; then gradually it fell back, gradually it calmed down, but only to rise again, and fall again, without rest, and ever without end, And what did this roar signify? Did it express joy, spite, cruelty? No, it was not the echo of any deep-rooted feeling, merely a noise, the thunder of an element.

VI

Towards three o'clock I descended into the street, perhaps for the tenth time. The guillotine was ready; the blade, separating the two posts, was silhouetted against the dark sky, looking more strange than terrible. I had expected to find the instrument of torture more imposing; the guillotine, long, straight, and narrow, reminded me of the arched and alert back of a swan, something sinister without grandeur. The heavy, plaited, blood-coloured basket inspired only repugnance; I knew it was into that basket the executioner would throw the body, still warm, and the severed head still throbbing.

The Municipal Guard had arrived a little before, and now made a vast semi-circle in front of the prison entrance. The horses snorted, crunched their bits, and swung their heads, and the whitening pavement under their hoofs was covered with spots of froth. The soldiers slept forlornly under their busbies, drawn down over their eyes.

The files of soldiers which filled the square had been spaced out; they were now about three hundred instead of two hundred feet from the door of the prison.

I went toward the line of uniforms so that I might better see the crowd that waited in its perpetual eddying; always the rumble of a blind force. I remember an urchin in a blouse, and a young man about twenty with his eyes bent on the ground, and he was smiling as if his memory was a pleasant memory. Suddenly throwing up his head with a quick movement he opened his mouth very wide and uttered a prolonged, wordless cry. Then he lowered his eyes again and began smiling. What was passing in that young man's soul? Why did he choose to remain eight hours in the cold, and without sleep?

My ear could not distinguish the varying remarks of the crowd; sometimes the piercing voice of the newspaper boys could be heard above the continuous roaring. They cried their papers and booklets containing an account of Troppman's life, even his execution and his last words. From time to time I heard disputes and brutal laughter, and the shrill cries of women. Five or six began to sing the "Marseillaise," but stopped abruptly. The "Marseillaise" is only impressive when it is sung by thousands of voices.

IN FRONT OF THE GUILLOTINE

"Down with Pierre Bonaparte," cried a voice. "Hou! Hou! Ah! Ah!" The clamour increased, and suddenly the cries became rhythmical: "Bon-a-parte, Bon-a-parte," to the air of the *Lampions*. The crowd must have absorbed an immense quantity of wine, for out of it rose an acrid steam, and there were many drunken men. The tavern lights flamed like red spots in the background, and the night grew blacker, the sky was no longer visible. On the trees which stood stark, like ghosts, perched bunches of urchins who whistled and imitated the cries of birds. One of them fell and broke his spine. He was fatally injured, but the crowd only laughed.

I went back to the Governor's apartments. In passing in front of the guillotine I perceived on the platform the executioner, and he surrounded by several prying folk for whose benefit he was rehearsing. He touched the spring of the plank to which the victim is roped; at the end of the plank was a crescent-shaped hole placed directly under the chopper; when he touched the spring the plank moved, and the blade descended automatically, falling quickly and with a thud. I could no longer watch this rehearsal; I had no wish to mount the scaffold. A feeling of crime, of secret shame took possession of me more and more. That is, perhaps, why the horses harnessed to the guillotine, peacefully munching their peck of oats before the door of the prison, seemed to me the only innocent creatures among us.

I threw myself again on the sofa and listened to the noise of that high tide which came to me without cessation.

VII

In accordance with the old saw, the last hour of waiting passed quicker than all the others put together. We were surprised to hear six o'clock ring out, and that only sixty minutes more remained before the execution took place. We were told that in another half hour we would be taken to Troppman's cell, and all weariness vanished and every face grew bright.

I do not know what my companions thought at that moment, but my heart was beating painfully. Some new

arrivals were introduced, a priest among the number, a little man with white hair and emaciated features, dressed in a long soutane, with the Cross of the Legion of Honour on his chest, and on his head was a large-brimmed hat. The Governor offered us some refreshments; in the parlour on the round table were large cups of chocolate; I could not drink any, but my host pressed me, saying that I should want it before the end, to revive me. "The morning air is very treacherous."

But it sickened me to try to eat; it was not a moment for eating, and for the hundredth time I said: "I have no right to be here; this is not my place."

"Is he still asleep?" someone in our group asked while relishing his chocolate. (Nobody spoke of Troppman by name; *he* could only apply to him.)

"He is still sleeping," the Governor answered.

"In spite of this hellish uproar?"

The noise had become ear-splitting; it was a raucous growling, the sinister choir no longer went crescendo, but burst out into joyous triumph.

"There are three walls between his cell and the street," added the Governor.

M. Claude who had returned to the principal rôle looked at his watch and said: "Twenty minutes past six. It is time we went."

I have no doubt that deep down in his consciousness each of us trembled, but nobody showed what he was feeling; as if there was nothing unusual, one after another took his hat, and followed his guide officiously.

"Where are you dining to-day?" a journalist asked in a loud voice.

He overdid it; we all knew that his indifference was only assumed.

VIII

We went through the great courtyard of the prison; in a corner, to the left, before a half-open door, we had to undergo a kind of roll call. Then we were allowed to enter a high, narrow room. It was empty with the exception of a brass stool in the middle of the floor, and M. Maxime

du Camp whispered in my ear: "It is here that the prisoner will be groomed." All our friends had not come; in counting them over, including the Governor, M. Claude, and the priest, there were ten.

During the two or three minutes we waited in that room while some formalities had to be gone through, the feeling that we had no right to do what we were doing, the feeling that we were helping with a simulated gravity at the murder of one of our fellow-creatures, that we were taking part in a hideous and illegal comedy, crossed my mind for the last time.

M. Claude signed to us to follow him down a long flagged passage lit by two very dim lamps, and from that moment I knew nothing more except that at once, at once, that instant, that second, something awful was about to take place.

Having quickly ascended two staircases, and crossed another passage, descended a winding staircase, we found ourselves before an iron door. *Here he is!*

The jailer cautiously turned the key in the lock; the door opened without a sound, and silently we glided into a large room with yellow walls, barred windows, and an empty and tumbled bed. The steady flame of a lamp showed every object plainly.

I was the last to enter, and I remember that I involuntarily closed my eyes, but not before I had noticed near me, to one side, a young face, light brown hair, and black eyes. He turned round slowly and looked at us with a prolonged and absent stare.

This was Troppman.

He had awakened before we came, and we found him sitting at a table on which was a letter of farewell to his mother. (It was an insignificant little letter.)

M. Claude took off his hat and approached the prisoner.

"Troppman," he said in his dry voice, low and flexible, "we have come to tell you that your appeal has been rejected, and that your hour has come." The condemned man raised his eyes which had lost their vague fixity; he looked him all over with a calm and sleepy air without saying a word.

"My son," cried the priest in a colourless voice, approaching him from the other side, "be brave."

Troppman turned upon him the same look that he had cast on M. Claude.

"I knew he was not afraid," M. Claude said, assuringly. "Now that he has so bravely stood the first shock, I will answer for him."

He was like a master flattering and encouraging a pupil at examination.

"Oh, I'm not afraid," the prisoner answered, "I'm not afraid."

He had a fresh young baritone voice that was very agreeable to listen to.

The priest took a bottle of wine from his pocket.

"Would you like a little wine, my son?"

"Thank you, I have no need for it," Troppman replied, bowing slightly.

"You still persist in declaring that you are innocent of the crime for which you are condemned?"

"I struck no blow."

"But—" said the Governor.

"I struck no blow."

"And you admit that you had accomplices that did strike the blow?"

"Yes, I admit that."

"You don't wish to name them?"

"I cannot, and I won't; no, I won't."

His voice grew menacing, his face flushed, and he seemed on the point of losing his temper.

"Very well, very well," M. Claude said soothingly, as if trying to make him understand that these questions were only a formality, and that it was already time for him to think of other things.

Then they began to get him ready, and before that lugubrious ceremony there were some preparations. Two warders approached the condemned man and began to take off the straight waistcoat, a sort of blouse made of coarse blue gingham, fastened at the back with thongs and buckles, and with long sleeves closed like bags and tied to the waistbelt by strong cords. Troppman was about two paces from me, on one side, and I could observe him at my ease. His face would have been beautiful if it had not been disfigured by a swollen and repulsive mouth, funnel-shaped, and fan-like a few black teeth spread them-

selves out in it. His dark hair was thick and slightly waved, the eye-lashes were long, and the eyes prominent and expressive. His forehead was high, and the nose regular and curved; a light down, black and frizzled, lay on his chin. This man, met elsewhere than in prison, and in other circumstances, would have made a favourable impression. I have met his type by hundreds among workmen and pupils of public schools. He was of middle height, with the slightness of youth, very graceful, and not yet twenty. His skin was a healthy colour, he was fresh and rosy, and did not pale even when we entered his cell. Throughout the night he had slept soundly.

While they were taking off his waistcoat he raised his eyes; his breathing was regular and deep like a man leisurely ascending a mountain. Once or twice he threw back his hair with a toss of his head, as if to chase away a pestering thought; then, turning his head round, he looked up quickly and sighed almost imperceptibly. Apart from these fugitive movements he betrayed no fear, nor even uneasiness, nor any kind of emotion. We were all without doubt more pale and agitated than he.

When his hands were free from the waistcoat he raised them with a smile of satisfaction to his head while they untied the thongs from behind; it was the gesture of a little child who is being undressed. Himself took off his shirt and put on a clean one, which he buttoned most carefully at the neck.

It was a strange sight to watch the easy and ample movements of that naked torso and the naked limbs showing against the yellow prison wall.

He put on his boots, noisily tapping the heel and the toe on the wooden floor to make them go on easier, and he did these things unconsciously, gaily; it was as if somebody had called to take him for a walk. He was silent, and we, too, were silent, merely exchanging looks and shrugs of the shoulders, for we were astonished at the simplicity of his bearing—a simplicity which, like all tranquil and natural phenomena in life, had a grace of its own.

One of the group, whom I met later in the day, told me that during the time we were in the cell it seemed to him that we had passed from the year 1870 back to 1794, and

were not simple citizens, but Jacobeans, leading to execution not a vulgar assassin, but a legitimist marquis, "A Red Heel."

When prisoners are receiving the death sentence they usually fall into a state of insensibility bordering of catalepsy, as if they were already dead before their execution, or they pose bravely, or they throw themselves into a state of nervousness, weeping, trembling, imploring pardon. Troppman belonged to none of these; his attitude surprised even M. Claude himself. I swear that if Troppman had been craven my nerves could not have stood it; I should have run away, but in the presence of his firm, simple, and modest demeanour all my feelings—the feeling of disgust that the murderer inspired in me, the monster who had throttled little children while they cried "Mamma, mamma," the feeling of pity that I felt for this human being whom death was going to swallow up—all my feelings were merged and drowned in one—that of wonderment.

And what was Troppman's moral support? Was he playing a part before spectators? Was he giving us a last exhibition? Or did his self-possession come from an inner courage? Was his pride excited by the words of M. Claude? The pride of that struggle which he would sustain to the end? Or was there some other sentiment which we could not divine?

He has brought his secret with him to the grave. Several people were convinced that Troppman was not in the full possession of his senses; the meaningless murder, which nothing could explain, certainly seems to confirm that opinion.

IX

When he had finished putting on his boots he stood up, straightened himself. "I am ready."

They put him into the strait waistcoat again. M. Claude asked us to leave the prisoner alone with the priest.

We had hardly been in the corridor two minutes before the frail young man joined us, his head lifted courageously, his figure drawn up. The religious sentiment was not strong in him; he went through this last ceremony as a formality. The priest coldly pronounced absolution.

IN FRONT OF THE GUILLOTINE

All our party, with the prisoner between us, mounted the narrow winding staircase which we had descended a quarter of an hour before. We were suddenly plunged into impenetrable darkness; the lamps had gone out; and a moment of indescribable confusion followed. We rushed down, jostling each other, our hurried feet ringing sonorously on the staircase. We pressed forward, our shoulders knocking against each other. Someone lost his hat and began to swear: "By God, will you get a candle, a light?"; and between us, in the darkness, was our victim, our prey. But where? If he had wished to profit by the blackness, and had been agile, he could have saved himself—where? Where? No matter where; in the corner of the prison he could have broken his head against the wall. At least he would have been his own executioner. I do not know if the others thought as I did; at any rate, my conjectures were groundless. When our party emerged out of the maze of the staircase into the corridor the frail young man was in our midst. The guillotine had not lost its prey. Then the procession formed towards the scaffold.

X

The procession was more or less of a scramble, Troppman walking in front with an alert and agile step, almost gaily and hurriedly, we trying to keep pace with him. A few managed to pass him on the right and left to get a glimpse of his face for the last time. We crossed the passage and descended the second stairs almost at a run, Troppman jumping two at a time; we flew along another passage, and having run up several more steps, found ourselves back in the room that had no furniture in it but a footstool. It was on that stool that the prisoner would be readied. We had entered by one door, and through another, in the opposite wall, there came slowly and gravely a man in a black coat with a white tie; one would have said he was a minister or a diplomat—he was the executioner. He was followed by an old man in a black frock coat, his first assistant, the executioner of Beauvais, who carried a leather bag in his hand.

Troppman stood quite still before the stool, and we were grouped about him. The executioner and his assistant

were on his right, behind them stood the priest; the Governor and M. Claude were on his left. The old man opened his bag with a key and took out several white straps with buckles; he struggled down on his knees behind Troppman and began to attach these to his feet. The prisoner had unknowingly put one foot on a strap, and the old man was obliged to raise his foot, but before touching Troppman's leg he said, "Excuse me, sir," twice. Troppman turned round, and with a slight bow raised his foot and loosed the leather band.

While this was going on the priest read in a low voice prayers in French from a book. Two other assistants of the executioner quickly removed the strait-waistcoat, crossed Troppman's hands behind his back, and began to wind the cords round the body. M. de Paris gave his instructions by an indication of the finger, to the right, to the left. . . . A hole had not been made in one of the thongs, the old man fumbled again in the bag, then in his pockets, and at last took out a crooked awl. He tried to pass it through the leather, but his fingers were swollen with gout and the leather was new and tough. At last he made a hole, then he tried to pass the hook through, but it would not go; he began again and tried to make a new eyelet hole; and the priest, seeing that all was not going smoothly, said the prayers slower, so that the old man might have more time.

When that operation came to an end, during which I confess a cold sweat ran down my face, they commenced another. They asked Troppman to sit down on the stool, and the old gouty man drew out a small pair of scissors, and twisting his mouth at every snip he carefully cut away the collar of the prisoner's shirt—the shirt that had been put on with so much care and which could have been so easily cut before giving it to him! The gingham was coarse and resisted the scissors' edge.

M. de Paris did not seem satisfied with these preparations; the opening at the neck was not large enough by a hand's breadth. The gout-ridden creature began again and cut away a large piece of the stuff, revealing the top part of the prisoner's back; the shoulder-blades could be seen, and Troppman drew them together, for the room was very cold. The old fellow then began at his hair; he put

one swollen hand on the young man's head, which was lowered submissively, and snipped with the right hand.

The locks of light brown hair slid over the young man's shoulders and fell to the ground, a curl rolled just to my feet. Troppman held his head down resignedly, the priest said the prayers still more deliberately. I could not take my eyes off the prisoner's hands, those hands reddened with innocent blood and now lying so inert, one upon the other; and then I looked at his throat, so white, so delicate, the throat of a child, and while I watched my imagination drew a transversal line across it . . . and on that throat, in a few minutes . . . the heavy blade would fall, tearing the sinews, severing the vertebræ. That body did not seem to deserve such a fate; it was so young, so white, so polished, so full of life! And in spite of myself I wondered "What thoughts are passing in that bent head? Is he saying with clenched teeth: 'No, I'll be brave'? Perhaps past memories are whirling in that head. Perhaps he sees one of his victims in agony. Perhaps he is saying: 'This is nothing at all; we shall see later'; and perhaps he will go on repeating this phrase until death falls upon him, and there never again will be any means of escape."

The clipping went on, the hair crunched between the old man's scissors, and when he was finished Troppman sat upright and shook his head. Usually this is the time for the prisoner, who is still capable of speech, to make a last request to the Governor, asking him to settle his debts for him with the money that remains over, thanking the warders, and charging those present to send a last letter or a curl to his parents. Troppman did none of these things; he despised such sentimentalities; he waited in a sullen silence. They threw a jacket over his shoulders, and the executioner took him by the elbow.

"Troppman," M. Claude said, breaking the sickening silence, "this is the great moment; in a few minutes all will be over. Do you still persist in keeping back the names of your accomplices?"

"Yes, sir, I do," Troppman answered, without the slightest tremor in his agreeable baritone voice, and he accompanied his words with a slight bow, as if he were sorry that it was impossible for him to give a more agreeable answer.

"Well, let us start," said M. Claude.

And we set out down the great courtyard of the prison.

XI

It wanted a minute to seven, and there was hardly any light in the sky; the fog choked the air and hid every object. The roar of the crowd stunned us, an interminable and shrill hooting greeted us almost before we had passed the threshold. Some had remained behind, the rest of us went at a great speed towards the door, and while walking with the others I drew to one side. Troppman walked quickly, dragging his feet, the straps impeding his steps.

He was so young, so small, almost a child!

The door swung back, a cry of gratification gushed from the crowd, and the monster awaiting its prey came into our view with its two posts and its chopper aloft in the dawning light.

A freezing cold penetrated to our bones, a cold which turned me sick, and it seemed that the cold had come with us through the same door; my legs shook under me. Then I looked at Troppman. His head was thrown back, his knees bent, as if he were about to receive a blow; "he is fainting," someone said near me; but he recovered immediately and marched with firm step. Those who wanted to see the head falling ran before him. I had not the courage; my heart tightened and I stood near the door.

I saw the executioner, like a black tower, rise suddenly at the left side of the guillotine; I saw Troppman separate himself from the others and climb the ladder (there were ten rungs, ten!); I saw him stop and glance around; I heard him say: "Tell M. Claude"; I saw him on the scaffold; I saw the men on left and right throw themselves upon him like spiders on a fly; I saw him advance, his head thrown forward, his feet groping; but I could look no more. I turned away and waited. The ground went from under me; I seemed to be waiting an eternity, and in that time I heard the roar of the crowd at the sight of Troppman burst like a bomb; and then a breathless silence.

In front of me stood a soldier, a young man with rosy cheeks, a robust fellow, and I knew that he was watching me intently, with a stupefied perplexity, and I thought

"There is that soldier, a boy from some distant village, belonging to good and honest parents—what is he seeing here?"

Then I heard the light noise of wood striking wood; it was the half-circle of the collar falling on the head of the prisoner. A dull roar followed, something rolled noisily, and an *oh!* It was like as if some huge animal were trying to vomit; that is the only sound I can compare it to. Everything grew dark; someone caught me by the arm; I looked at him, it was M. Claude's secretary, M. G——, whom I afterwards learnt M. Maxime du Camp had asked to look after me.

"You are very pale. Would you like some water?" he asked me, smiling. I thanked him and went back through the courtyard to the prison, which now seemed to me like a haven from the atrocities that were being committed without.

XII

Our group gathered again in the guardhouse near the door to bid the Governor good-bye and to allow the crowd time to scatter. I went in also, and heard some more details. Troppman, before being tied to the plank, had thrown his head on one side so that it would not go into the collar; the executioners pulled him back by the hair and he bit one of their fingers. I also heard how, immediately after the execution, when the body had been thrown into the van, which had disappeared rapidly, two men made their way through the crowd of soldiers, and going up to the guillotine they sopped their handkerchiefs in the blood which flowed through the chinks of the planks.

I listened to the conversation like one in a dream; I was very weary, and so was everybody else; at the same time they all looked relieved, as if a burden had fallen from their shoulders; but not one of us, I say not one, looked like a man who felt sure that he had been present at the carrying out of an act of justice; they all seemed to turn from it, as if wishing to shake off all responsibility of this murder.

I bade good-bye to the Governor, and went away with Maxime du Camp. A flood of human beings, men, women

and children rolled before us, a dirty and hideous stream. Everybody was silent; just a workman now and then asking: "Where are you going? And you?" and the occasional whistle of an urchin when a light-of-love passed in her carriage. Every face wore an expression of boredom, fatigue, discontent, disillusionment and vexation; there were no drunken men; evidently they had been brought home or had gone to bed themselves. And all this crowd were drawn again into the toothed wheel of daily life. And what were their feelings as they returned to this life?

As we went I discussed with M. Maxime du Camp the scenes we had witnessed that night. Why were these spectacles allowed? Why were the barbarous customs of the Middle Ages retained? What was the purpose of that toilet, the walks through the corridors and up the staircases? And capital punishment itself—how do we justify it?

We have seen what effect the spectacle produced on the crowd; I should say the illusion, for out of the seventy thousand men perhaps fifty or sixty, hardly more, could only see something in the dim light of morning, from behind the backs of soldiers. And the others? What had they gained from that demoralising night? That night of debauchery?

I recall the young workman whom I watched for a few minutes. Did he believe that he would go to his work with more energy and a more vigorous hate for sloth and vice?

And myself—what have I drawn from the emotions of that night?

An involuntary feeling of wonderment in the presence of a man I knew to be a murderer, a monster of immorality, because he knew how to face death! Is that the result aimed at by the Legislature? Wherein lies the famous "moral end" of executions, so often belied by facts?

But enough of argument; the subject is an endless one. Yet no one will deny that capital punishment is one of the burning questions of the present day.

But if my narrative will help those who wish to abolish capital punishment, or at least help to prevent these executions being turned into a public spectacle, I shall be content, and will forgive myself for this night spent in front of the guillotine.

Anastasio Lucena

By R. B. Cunninghame Graham

We lay so near the shore in a steam tug that we could hear the noises of the city, and see the lights that looked so close, it seemed that you could touch them by stretching out your hand. The watchmen called each hour, informing us that the night was serene, after having hailed the Blessed Virgin in a long drawn-out wail.

Though we had lain there for three days in quarantine, none of us could sleep, partly on account of the mosquitos and partly from the uneasy pitching of the tug boat in the muddy current of the River Plate.

Three of us wiled away the time by fishing and by telling stories, the travellers' resource at such times, as we sat and smoked. Our budget was exhausted, and after having sat a long time silent in the sweltering heat, Mansel said suddenly: "I have told you all my yarns, but I can recollect a thing, there is no story in it, that left a strong impression on my mind."

We looked towards him gratefully as he sat cutting tobacco on his riding boot, with a long silver-handled knife. Tall, dark and nervous, with round, prominent eyes, a sparse moustache, a skin tanned by the sun to a brick-dark red, his thick brown hair cut short like a French soldier's, or, as he called it, "all the same dog's back," although he wore the loose black merino trousers worn by all "camp-men" in those days, shoved into patent leather riding boots, and slept, as we said, in his spurs, you saw he once had been a sailor, at the first glance. The sea leaves marks upon its votaries that even time never entirely rubs out, perhaps because, being an element so hostile to mankind, the difficulty of accustoming oneself to all its moods alters a man for life.

Rough-tongued and irascible, he was one of those who in their dictionaries have never come upon the verb "to fear."

He slowly rolled his cigarette and sheathed his silver-handled knife behind his back, leaving the haft just sticking out below his elbow on the right side. After expelling through his mouth and nostrils a sort of solfatara of blue smoke, he said: "Yes, call my yarn a memory, a recollection . . . for it is not a story, only a circumstance that I remember vividly, just as one never can forget an object seen in a flash of lightning . . . perhaps the word should be . . . "; one of us interjected "an Impression"; he nodded and began his tale:—

"Night caught me, miles from a house, on a tired horse, and with a storm of wind and rain, such as you only see upon the plains. At first I galloped, hoping to arrive at some place where I could pass the night under a roof, and then as the darkness thickened, my horse, impervious to the spur, slackened down to a jog, which in these parts they call a 'trotecito.' An hour or so of stumbling through the darkness, broken occasionally by lightning that seemed to run along the ground, of being suddenly brought up against a stream which seemed impossible to pass, and having to ride up banks to find a crossing, and the jog-trot became a walk.

"No matter how I spurred, nothing could move my horse; but just as I was thinking that I should have to pass the night out in the 'camp,' I thought I heard the distant barking of a dog. My horse had heard it too, and, turning him towards the sound, I felt him quicken up again to a slow, shuffling trot. It seemed I rode for hours, until at last the barking grew more furious, and in the distance a feeble light gleamed rather than shone, just like a vessel's mast-head light at sea. I brushed through some tall thistles, and by dint of whip and spur drove my horse, now so tired he could scarcely drag himself along, towards the barking of the dogs.

"At last my horse emerged out of the long, rough grass that clothes (or used to clothe) the southern Pampas, on to the open space before a house. Though it was dark I felt the difference at once, and the soft rustling of the wild grasses that sounds at night almost as if you rode through water ceased at once, and I began to hear my horse's footfall on the hard-trodden ground. The folded sheep were bleating in the 'chiquero,' and when I turned

towards it, I divined rather than saw the piles of cut, dried thorns, ranged in a circle, after the fashion that one sees amongst the Arabs, forming the corral, from which an acrid smell, rising from all the fleeces closely packed together, floated on the night air.

"Advancing still a little further, I saw the house, a mud and wattle rancho, with its low thatched roof. Through the interstices of the walls came the reflection of the fire, which burned right in the middle of the floor. It seemed as if at last, after long years of battling with the storm, that I had reached a haven of some sort. The rancho stood forlorn upon the open space. No tree, no shrub, no garden, or any patch of cultivated ground cut it off from the plain, that seemed to flow right up to it on every side.

"A dried and crumpled mare's hide formed the door. As the wind beat on it and got in between it and the jambs it surged about, reminding me of a boat heaving at a wharf. Right opposite the door, and twenty yards or so away, stood a great hitching post of Nandubay, at which to fasten horses, and spurring up to it, I called out, 'Ave Maria purissima,' received the answer 'Sin Pecado Concebida.' A man seemed to rise from the darkness by my side, and saying in a gentle voice, 'Welcome, get off and let your horse loose, he is too tired to stray,' called off the pack of barking dogs and led me by the hand into the house. The mare's hide swung to behind us stiffly, blotting out the night, and the bright glare from the blazing hearth was almost blinding to my eyes, fresh from the storm and rain. 'Sit down upon one of those bullocks' heads,' said my entertainer, 'your horse cannot go far, and if he is too tired to travel in the morning I will give you one of mine.'

"He spoke, and as he stood beside the fire that burned on the low hearth, erect and sinewy, with his long mane of jet-black hair, a little flecked with grey, falling down on his shoulders, I saw that he was blind. His eyes appeared quite perfect, but evidently saw nothing, and as he moved about the rancho he now and then touched with his shoulder or his head some of the horse gear that hung from pegs upon the walls. He must have somehow felt I saw his great calamity—for out upon the plains what cross could possibly be heavier to bear?—for he said, 'Yes, I am blind. The visitation came from God, only three

years ago. It crept upon me by degrees, no one knows how, although a doctor in the town said it was paralysis of the optic nerve; not that I cared much what he said, for when a man is blind it comes from God, like death or any other ill.'

"He paused and motioned with his hand towards me, just as if he saw, towards the bullocks' heads, and when I squatted down, he too took his seat on one of them. 'Take off your boots,' he said, 'and dry yourself, and throw some wood upon the fire—it is there in the corner; my son, he who sleeps there on his "recado" took care to pile up plenty, for I smelt the coming of the storm.'

"I had not seen the boy, who now turned on his elbow and looked up. His father went on: 'He is tired, for at this moment we are alone here in the rancho; my wife and family have gone to town, and he has had to be on horseback all the day, from the time when the false dawn streaks the sky, till sundown, doing all the work.' As I piled the wood upon the fire my host looked towards me and said, 'How tall you are!' And when I asked him how he knew, said, 'The voice comes from the rafters as it were. We blind think much on things that in our seeing days we took no notice of.'

"The storm still raged outside, and as my things dried before the fire of bones and ñandubay, that feeling of contentment that comfort brings with it after exposure to the weather for long hours, stole over me. The boy upon his saddle had turned his face away from the glowing embers, and the hut felt like a ship at sea; and I, a passenger under the guidance of a pilot who was blind, felt myself listening to his talk, as if he were a friend of years, as happens in the plains when men meet casually, just as it happens with the other animals. A horse puts out his head and snuffles, and his fellow instantly becomes his friend, or at least he is not actively his enemy, and the same thing occurs with men.

"Under the directions of my host, I put a side of mutton down to roast, skewering it upon an iron spit, which he said I should find stuck in the thatch. The roast crackled and sputtered, and the rich juices fell into the fire and made it fiercer, and as it roasted slowly, we passed round the maté, I having put the kettle and the bag of yerba

into the blind man's hand. Practice had made it just as easy for him to pour the water into the hole cut in the gourd as it is for a man who wears a sword to sheathe it in the dark. So after having filled the gourd, and taken a long pull of it to see that it was working properly, he passed it to me, and I sucked the hot, bitter mixture with the avidity of a man who has been storm-tossed and has not eaten since the early dawn.

"My host had the not unnatural curiosity of a defenceless man upon a frontier to know if there was any recent movement amongst the Indians, for his fate would not have been uncertain if at any time—even upon the night we sat and talked—a raiding party of the Tchehuelches or the Pampas had happened to pass by. 'Our lives,' he said, 'are in God's hand,' a truism which it was hard to controvert, though at the same time, situated as we were, the intervention of a good and speedy horse might have assisted fate. Still, when he listened now and then, and held the maté halfway to his lips, and gave that strained attention that makes the attitude of listening in blind men seem, as it were, to indicate some extra sense in them. I watched him with some trepidation till he said: 'It is nothing, only a stallion rounding up his mares.' 'Each night,' he said, 'I saddle up a horse and leave him tied under a shed behind the house, and if I could but get my hand upon his mane I might yet lead the Indians a dance.' He saw my look of wonder, and rejoined: 'I should ride keeping the wind upon my cheek, and as the night is dark, I and the Indians would be on an equality. In fact, I think that if there were any advantage, that it would be upon my side, for I know all the "camps" for leagues on every side, so well, that I can cross them easily, even though I am blind.'

"I looked at him, and thought what a fine figure he would look wrapped in a double darkness, with his hair flying in the wind, and his eyes open but unseeing, as he galloped through the night. When the roast was ready, I took the horn in which was kept the salt and water, from a peg and sprinkled it, and then, with a courteous gesture, my host pointed towards the meat, and we fell to, cutting great junks off with our knives and holding one end in our teeth, cut them down to our lips. We talked about the

usual topics of the 'camp,' the marks of horses, Indian incursions, the accursed ways of government, the locusts, and the things that in such countries replaces the reports of parliaments and police-courts, and all the villainies of city life.

"Then we lay down upon our saddles, after the tall, blind Gaucho, whose name I learned was Anastasio Lucena, had said the rosary. Morning broke fine and clear, with a slight film of frost upon the grass. In the 'chiquero' the sheep were bleating to be let out, and cattle on the hills got up and stretched themselves, looking like camels as they stood with their heads high and their hindquarters drooping to the ground. A distant wood behind a little hill was hung suspended in the sky, with the trees growing towards the earth by an effect of mirage, and from the world there came a smell of freshness and a sensation of new birth. My horse was not in a fit state to travel, and when the boy had driven the 'tropilla' up to the corral, Anastasio Lucena unsaddled and let loose the horse he always kept tied up at night for fear of Indians, which rolled and neighed and then galloped off to seek its fellows in the 'camp.' We stood in the corral, and, as I swung the lazo round my head two or three times to see it had no kinks, I said to Anastasio, 'Which of the horses may I catch?'

"He looked towards them just as if he saw them perfectly, and answered, 'Anyone you like except the little "doradillo." He is my wife's and she will soon be back again from town, where she has gone to buy the children clothes.'

"As the tropilla galloped round the corral I marked a cream-coloured with a black tail and mane, and threw the lazo, which uncoiled just like a snake and settled round his neck. 'Which have you caught,' asked Anastasio, and I answered, 'The black-cream-colour.' He smiled and said: 'A little quick to mount, but a good horse—well, let him loose to-night just after dark, when you get to the Estancia de la Cascada, a short ten leagues away, and by the morning he will be back at home. Your horse I will have collared to the mare, and you can send for him in a week or so, when he is rested and fit again for work.'

"I saddled up, thanked Anastasio Lucena for his

hospitality, who answered that he was my servant, and that his house was mine whenever I might pass. Then mounting, not without difficulty, for the black cream-colour was quick as lightning in the turns he made the instant that you raised your foot towards the stirrup, I struck into a canter, and, after the first bound or two was over and the horse settled to a steady lope, turned and looked back towards the rancho where I had passed the night. Upon the threshold stood its owner, tall and erect; his long black hair just flecked with grey, falling down on his shoulders, reminded me somehow of pictures of Christ that I had seen. His head was turned towards the sound of the black cream-colour's hoofs, and his eyes, open but sightless, seemed to take in the Pampa with its indomitable space."

Mansel stopped, passed his own hand across his eyes as if they pained him with the intensity of the impression they had received long years ago, and then, as if he were talking to himself, said:—

"Adios, Anastasio Lucena—or perhaps I ought to say 'so long.' Perhaps he now has taken the long 'galopito' on which his want of sight was not a hindrance to him, or perhaps he now sees better than we do ourselves. Quien sabe? Anyhow, he has come back to me to-night, and I am glad to thank him once more for his hospitality, and his good cream-colour with the black tail and mane."

Fables and Epigrams

By Edward Storer

To a Dancer.

"Light Woman" those other women call you. Yes, you are light as is a butterfly. You evade the clumsy loves of men who would beat you down from your airy way to gaze at you with the fixed eyes of desire.

Priceless thing! immortal image of love, you will give them no peace, no satisfaction. Better than this a thousand times, you will give them the power to love.

The Offering.

"Woman," I cried, "your body is beautiful. Your breath is as the scent of violets. Your slim limbs have the grace of osiers. Your breasts are as waking water-lilies. The curve of your back is taut as a stretchèd bow.

"Let me spare you some pain. Take my heart—and when you are hurt, use its good blood for salve."

"Fool," she answered me, "give what is your own. 'Tis mine already."

The Serpent of Memory.

When you are kissing her, my friend who will one day succeed me, look in all the honey of her love for a touch of myrrh. Look in the tenderness which she offers you for the asp of disdain.

There may persist some memory of an earlier lover which will be hissing at you with all the fury of an angry serpent.

Sunlight.

It is raining to-day, and the leaden drops fall down with the persistence of angry things. The town groans under its burdens, and lifts a wreath of smoke to the implacable sky.

It is sunshine in my room, blinded as I am by the

whiteness of your body and the darkness of your eyes, which shine like lake-water full of centuries of stored sunshine.

The Ascetic.

Ascetic, I understand thee! Violet draperies, nor porphyry, nor gold, nor wine—not for these wilt thou sell thy soul. Kisses, moonlight on water, the blossoms on spring's trees—what use hast thou for these?

Doors, doors, doors all. Thou, voluptuary, art content with the key!

The Golden Lie.

Why do we lie to each other so? How comes it that we who love cannot, if we will, speak to each other the truth?

Ah! friend, ah! world, ah! foolish self, the truth is not ours. We but hold it in trust.

The Women.

Beautiful pagan women, when they welcome you in the churches, do they know what serpents they are taking to their breasts?

Quietly you sit and tell your beads, and the priests have no more subtle flatterers than yourselves.

So full of resignation you seem, so happy in your smiling piety. Full of pity and compassion are those eyes of yours, and you allow the brutal minutes to trample unresisted upon your delicate flesh.

Let them beware! for within those shadows of pity are lurking swords of cruelty.

Let them beware lest they press you too far or guard you insufficiently well!

Beneath your restricting dresses your bodies are as avid as ever of sunlight and admiration. Your fingers through which the beads drip like drops of prayer have not lost their skill in encircling throats.

Let them beware lest that hidden fire of your hearts bursts not out again and consumes their sacred edifices, while you run to your lovers' arms with the very gold and silver pieces of the tabernacle.

A Phial of Tenderness.

A phial of tenderness I offer you, but alas! you will not take it. Go spill it over the weary feet of the world like a perfume.

I offer you my hate. If it displease you, give it to the cowardly.

I offer you my heart. (O! be not too cruel!)

Alas! 'tis no more mine to give; you've stolen it already.

The Market Place.

One walking in the market place of dreams took up some smiles, and, as he turned them over, lo! they were tears.

Kisses.

Tarnished and impure are the kisses of women. Their eagerness is half regret and half revenge. Insincere are the kisses of courtesans. Only the kisses of maids are sincere, beautiful and insipid.

Sleep, How Thou Mockest!

Sleep, how thou mockest at death with thy votaries lying down prone before thee! Still they are, though trembling with the thoughts of awakening as the winter-enshrouded earth pulses with the coming spring.

Yet, O death, perhaps this imitator of thy ways is thy slave, and goes into courts and cottages, into forests and fields to teach men thy orders and proclaim thy coming and thy ways.

But in love thou hast a real foe who makes of all thy lessons a divine mockery.

Dost thou ever wonder if the very dead themselves, lying side by side, are always eternally still?

Good-bye.

Good-bye! Your parting words will follow me through the days and nights like a flock of beautiful birds.

Alone.

"Do you not see how utterly alone we are?"

The pathway opened out before us, twisting and full

of allurements, leading we knew not whither, we cared not whither.

Something in our breasts warned us faintly not to go so far from all the haunts of men, out of reach, out of sound, out of any pity or help, but we were happy and ran on. And now we stand alone in this cold, clear light, looking at each other across a dark pool of water in which our frightened faces are mirrored—wondering what it all means.

Unconquered Love.

When you are playing with your little ones, and your good wife is by your side, and all the pleasant calm of your life fills you with peace, it may be you will suddenly smile a little sadly, and a sigh will escape you, as the memory of an unconquered love returns for a moment to your mind.

Losses and Gains.

Lovers, when the time comes for you to count your losses and your gains, will you be able to bring yourselves to the task? How will your few poor kisses and that little while in which you were honest look beside those countless days over which you had no control?

The Guest.

O crude men, with your violent passions so little trained and ordered by the mind, mark how women love! Less passionate than you, their love is so much more refined, so much more intellectual. Yours disorders your mind, as good fortune disorders an ignorant person. Love but awakens theirs as if it were their right, not their fortune.

What should the poor guest do but hurry away from two such discordant hosts?

Sad as Ancient Songs.

Sad as ancient songs are your eyes, and I know there are memories in your blood of a bygone minstrel who sang to a woman beneath her window one night in a far-away summer when she was ready to love, and passed on.

Never will you be wholly mine until I can recapture the music of that old song.

O, of all airs of the world, which is the one that can give me your heart?

Pity.

A young bride and bridegroom were coming out of a church. By the door crouched a poor old man. The lovers looked at him, and he at them, yet am I not sure which pitied the other the more.

The Bird that Beateth its Wings.

The bird that beateth its wings so frantically against the bars of the cage—it must escape or die. Such untamed creatures are the finest and best; thinking, it may be, of the nest in the pine-tree or the cry of its fellow that came to it with the dawn.

So my beloved beateth her wings, and I can do nothing but watch and wait.

The Cowards.

Many men and women I saw standing by the edge of a deep lake, whose opposite shore was rich with the most beautiful prospect.

Long all these folk looked and waited, encouraging each other to enter; sometimes retreating and sometimes returning as if ready to make a plunge. Some fear seemed to restrain them.

Then there floated back to them of a sudden a beautiful corpse, whose face was lit with an expression in which joy and anguish were subtly woven.

All the onlookers treated the fair dead with the greatest respect. Some looked in the eyes, as if trying to read a riddle. Some even kissed the tortured, smiling mouth.

But gradually all went away, except one youth and one maiden, who stood together by the waters of the lake. "'Tis so terrible to love," he whispered; "one must be so brave."

Love the Monster.

She looked in at my window, calling to me to come out and walk in the sun. I did not love her, yet I would not send her away. And again and again she came, and my heart, acting old happiness, or dreaming of new, spoke faint words of seeming love.

But she was not deceived, and a young man bore her away from me, leaving me—strangely—a little angry.

O love! thou monster! ever wilt thou have human sacrifices!

Easy Love.

Sitting in his cell, a monk heard two lovers go laughing past. They kissed; and in all the world there was none to gainsay or reproach them.

"Poor fools!" thought the monk; "what do they know of love?"

The Cats.

When sleep has stilled the city with her kiss, and the lone street-lamps await the dawn, there are creatures creeping under the bushes or moving noiselessly upon the housetops.

Man, weary and disgusted with life, leaves it for sleep, but in the savage green eyes of the cats and in their cries of passion, nature may learn that the city is not dead, and that beauty and terror are not buried in the ghastly mausoleum of a town.

Sunday.

How still are all the streets to-day! Polluted by the passionate traffic of the week, they lie heavily adream, like weary courtesans. The arc-lights—struggling moths pinned against the dark board of the sky—writhe and hiss.

A mellow sweetness numbs the air, and from a distance I cannot define, a woman's voice reveals how still it is.

It does not seem like anyone a-singing.

It is as though the hour were in love.

Sentiment.

From nowhere, so it seems, there comes a thought of her; and so vivid is it, that it is as though she had spoken to me, and once again we were looking into each other's eyes. From nowhere comes—I say: how can that be? Surely it comes from her, light-tipped with mockery—love barbed that it may the deeper pierce.

Why do you come—disturbing, useless thought?

O coward she! weakly to let you go; but still more coward I to take you in!

The Stars.

What golden-footed host, what maddened throng have

left these burning footprints in the sky, and whither are they gone?

A Barque for Cythera.

Take, vessel of fancy, my hopes to Cythera. Ah! what white merchandise will await us there? This only I would ask of the Cyprian, that when she afflicts us, our love may be large and passionate, that nothing beauteous may suffer in our keep.

So hopes set sail! prepared to drift unto the nethermost waters of the world, whose sable tongues lick up the savage sand.

Set sail, young hopes, until you find the ivory prison of love's arms!

Set sail for Cythera beneath the aching moon and the frail silver of the climbing stars!

Reverence.

The morning wears a new face, and the streets and the people and the trees live in your senses with a delightful vividness now that you are in love. Sounds are round and perfect, and you hear them to their last note. The colour of the roses—you can match it in your heart, and the very stones upon the road have a life and purpose of their own.

It is not your senses which have grown brighter, but you carry a great truth in your breast, and all the world inclines to you in reverence.

The Wine-cup.

A wine-cup spoke: "Into my golden mouth is poured all this red riot of life, and yet the joy and reality of it are never mine."

And looking on one in love, I knew my wine-cup was a human heart.

The Fruit of Earth.

The sublime and final fruit of earth is the body of man.

What is his childhood but a fair springtime; his youth but a summer?

Does the rose fret that she must die? She wears her crimson insolently in the sun, and nothing knows.

And what more knows man of death than she?

Shall he be then less brave?

The Rout.

Dance, beautiful youths and maidens, over the lawn, hand in hand; song and laughter struggling for your lips!

All the earth is in your bodies—the roses in your cheeks; the languor of ripe fruit in your breasts; snow in your fair skins; lake-water in your eyes; the magic of foliage in your supple limbs. There is not a fruit nor a flower, not a fair thing in the world, but has its image in you.

Dance gaily on the green lawn! The dew that your lithe feet trample is less bright than your eyes. The violets you scatter from your pink fingers are not sweeter than your breath.

Dance, beautiful human beings! The cold stars are dancing. Outdo the silent measures of their feet!

Patience.

Dallying with her lover in the lane, she found time so sweet she could not gainsay him.

But her master and mistress at home she knew awaited her coming with anxiety.

Over the fields of corn the moon was shining, and to her the maid stretched out her arms, crying:

"Ah! you have patience, you can understand!"

The Grapes are Crushed.

The grapes are crushed beneath the pressers' feet to make for men the rich and golden wine.

Men's hearts are crushed and drainèd of their love by fate to yield the joy of the gods.

The Fir-tree.

The fair, slim fir-tree stands by itself on a ridge of the hill. No others are near it, and in the night it weeps.

Do you not see yourself, O lonely man?

The Final Triumph.

Standing by the body of his dead mistress the lover thought: "What secrets these limbs of hers carry to the tomb! I can regard them now as never I could when they were hers. As things she has used and forgotten, how clear is their meaning to me. That foot, that instep, so lithe for hurrying, so apt for every treacherous coquetry

of motion! That delicate hand to welcome or warn me, to excite me with longing, to exile me with fear. That face of hers—no, not even now can I wrest its secret from it, for though death has killed her body, he cannot touch the memory of her.

Beloved! to the last you triumph."

The Church.

The great black church that lies folded in trees and gloom at the end of the street has birds nesting and singing in its grim and dusky eaves, and the impudent blossoms of spring thrust their faces through its painted windows.

Eaten with age and careworn it seems, silent and still as an old man who has devoured his youth.

But that lad and lass who strain breast to breast in the open country are coming to it step by step over the grass they touch but do not feel.

The Bell.

Soft-toned bell speaking to me from the village church over the golden fields this autumn afternoon, I can hear all that you say, but what are you thinking?

Wise one, in the heart of a mystery, you are mysterious yourself.

The Swan.

On the river a beautiful white swan passed by my boat, silently, gravely, like a sleeping flower. Seeing it, and yet scarcely seeing it, I became suddenly aware as it floated past that with it had gone one of the happiest thoughts of my life.

"Come back! O, come back, lovely bird!" I cried, but it melted into the dark waters like snow.

Take Her to Your Breast.

Take her to your breast whom fate has given you and be happy. Find in her eyes all the sparkle of running water, all the whiteness of the lily in her skin, all the beauty of spring in her smile.

The dark night that covers you will be rent soon enough, and the myriad tongues of morning will call you your ways.

Ah! what millions of days have been needed to bring you this hour that one dawn can end!

Love is a Song.

Love is a song that leaves nothing when it has passed but a beautiful memory. 'Tis no more; believe not its sweet perjuries when it promises you the world.

Guard those goodly riches of your youth.

Will you ruin yourself for a song?

Of Pyrrha.

You passed me on the stairs, and though our hands but met, I could feel you against my breast.

All the old songs and all the old poets are liars.

Not one of them has ever described love.

Of Pyrrha.

To Pyrrha now I turn in my unhappiness, blind fool that I am to damn myself for the sweet curve of a cheek, the foolish riddle of an eye.

O my blood, why do I thus contemn thee who would have thee make me happy?

Be braver than I, and dare again the sweet pain of love!

Kisses.

Where will our kisses lead us? Sweetest are those in which lies a little mockery, as that night is sweetest which fears most the day.

The Moon has Gone Her Way.

The moon has gone her way and I mine. What is she doing, lonely in her forest of stars? And I—what am I doing?

Ah, Fate, this Lyre.

Ah, Fate, this lyre on which thou playest loves thee. Strike harder, strike harder, and do not fear to break!

Of Pyrrha.

Softly, night! Let us creep to bed and disturb not the morning. The dawn has a golden task in hand. He gives my Pyrrha again to the world.

Of Pyrrha.

It is midnight; and I laugh at death. Pyrrha is not yet yours, still as she lies. She sleeps, she only sleeps.

It is Long Past Midnight.

It is long past midnight, and nature is still. I fear her silence. Is she meditating new anguish for my poor sleeping fellows?

Know one mortal is still awake, sweet and cruel one, and to you he bares his breast.

Of Pyrrha.

Pyrrha, my thoughts flutter like white birds about thy bed. Sleep on, dearest, and do not fear they will awaken thee. They come from me.

Of Pyrrha.

Walking with Pyrrha, I passed by some old men who perceived our tender secret. But by their glances at her beauty, so slender and so cruel, I could see they did not pity us as they do all the others.

Old men! this last folly of yours—how it flatters my happiness!

Of Pyrrha.

Pyrrha, when the moon shines on your cheek, making of it a profile of warm ivory, it is as though I held herself to my breast, and small, and pale and beautiful, she nestled beneath my chin.

Is this so strange a fancy of mine who can feel all the beauty of earth glowing in my breast?

Hesperides.

In the old garden with its stone flags and high secluding walls we talked bareheaded beneath the stars.

Though our words seemed as light as those of all the others, I fancied it was at us the fountain aimed its trickle of mocking water, for our eyes most of all that the lantern glowed on the branches. The trees had yielded up their fruit in the first flush of autumn, but there were golden apples hanging in that garden still for lovers' hands to pluck.

The Poem.

Beautiful poem, why so sad and sweet? Resolute and heroic, you go among the throng of words. Delicate yet strong, you pursue your way with the meaning of some solemn charge set upon your face.

Did he who made you fill you with such awe of him that you go about the ways of thought for ever seeking his like?

No, he did not make me. He found only words that were in love.

The Poet's Prayer.

O, world, I am weary of kneeling at thy feet, for I am one of thy lovers. Hear my cry, which must reach thy heart, so that I may meet thee evenly, eye to eye.

Break me or slay me as thou wilt, thou must face me, for I am thy man.

The Stillness of Night.

How beautiful is the stillness of night! It is as though Nature repented of her cruelty to man and gave him a foretaste of peace.

But no; this very stillness is intensest life.

O, may I shape a few poor minutes as she has shaped her rare, still night!

The Thief.

Beautiful one, why do we love you so? Why is the cynic restless, the poet afire, the old man foolish, the young maid awed?

Beautiful one, you have stolen all our dreams.

Love and Time.

As your face leaned up to mine, tender and oblivious—"So little time," I thought: "So little love."

And the wind speaking again seemed to say "Fool! there never was any more of love or of time."

The Suicide.

Brutal men with your compromises and easy lies, you dare to touch this fair girl's memory with your hypocritical words—she that died for life and the world, she that died for you.

The Suicide.

Come back, beautiful girl, they were not worth your tears.

You believed in life, you believed in the world; and when it failed you, you could only hold yourself in the wrong.

Let this poor minute struggle into broken speech, and thank you for the beauty of that your final kiss.

O Moon, O Goddess.

O moon! O goddess! may not even the gods themselves suffer in their lonely heaven?

Thy hurt is older far than mine who am but dust whose changes thou hast never noticed, and thou art silent.

The Blackberry Bloom.

The blackberry bloom shakes in the wind on the hillside. Airs that were stirring in my heart, see how you sing all over the wold.

The Sea.

From the hill-top I have a sudden sight of the sea stretched out endlessly in a silvery flood.

Go free my dreams! Go free!

At the Dance.

Revellers all, with your fine clothes and elegant manners, it is but a sham you play.

False the tenderness of the reluctant waltz, false that gay address, false those languishing eyes.

Beauty and fear escape your bedizened menagerie, mocking the sensual longing in your eyes. That poor youth and girl walking down the muddy street together in the rain know more of them than all of you here.

The Army of Man.

Put your face to my face. Give me your hand. We are ready now. Calmly our eyes face the heavens. Proudly our feet touch the earth. Love sounds the bugle, and onward we march.

It is not afraid of you, dark death—the army of man.

The Handkerchief.

I thought that old love forgotten, and believed there was no living thought of Timarion in my heart, when find-

ing a strayed handkerchief she had once worn, the little thing reproached me saying—

"Why even I, poor fragment of silk, do not forget."

Spring.

O spring, go back! Bide a little while longer in the icy caverns of winter, for I think the old earth fears thee as a heart may fear love

The Wind.

The snowdrop, the early lily, and a young maid sighing for love.

Fear not, sweet things: there is a strong wind will find you all.

The Further Side of Silence

By Sir Hugh Clifford, K.C.M.G.

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SOME years before the impassive British Government came to disturb the peace of primitive nature and to put an end to the strife of primitive man, Kria, son of Mat, a young Malay from one of the western States, sneaked up into the Tĕlom and established himself as a trader on its banks well within the fringe of the Sâkai country.

Aided by a few Sâkai—feeble and timid jungle-folk, the aboriginal possessors of the Peninsula—but mainly with his own hands, he built himself a house with walls of thick, brown bark, raised to a height of some six feet above the ground on stout, rough-hewn uprights, and securely thatched with *bĕrtam* palm-leaves. It was a rude enough affair, as Malay houses go, but compared with the primitive and lop-sided architecture of the Sâkai it was palatial. The fact that this stranger had planned and built such a mansion impressed the fact of his innate racial superiority upon the jungle-dwellers once and for all. Here, they saw, was Genius, no less; though their language (which among other things has only three numerals and as many names for colours) contained no word even remotely conveying any such idea. The mere fact that their poor vocabulary was straightway beggared by the effort to express their admiration, left them mentally gasping; wherefore, Kria son of Mat, a very ordinary young Malay, endowed, as it chanced, with few of the forceful qualities of his race, found himself of a sudden an object of almost superstitious hero-worship.

Kria presently made the discovery anent solitude which is attributed to Adam. He was a Malay and a Muhammadan, to whom the naked, pantheistical Sâkai is a dog of indescribable uncleanliness. Thirty miles down river there was a Malay village where many maidens of his own breed were to be had, almost for the asking, from their grateful

parents by a man so well-to-do as Kria had now become; but these ladies were hard-bit, ill-favoured young women, prematurely gnarled by labour in the rice-fields and tanned to the colour of the bottom of a cooking-pot by exposure to sun and weather. Ordinarily, however, the aggressive plainness of these damsels might not have affected the issue; but it chanced that the particular devil whose province it is to look after *mésalliances* was as busy here in this hidden nook of the forest as ever he is in Mayfair. It was surely by his contrivance that Kria, Malay and Muhammadan that he was, fixed his heart upon a Sâkai girl—herself the daughter of Sâkais nude, barbarous and disreputable—and the blame may with greater certainty be allotted to him, because Kria's first meeting with her was in no sense of his seeking.

He had come up the Tĕlom one day from his new house in a dug-out imported from down-country, whose finish converted it, in the eyes of his neighbours, into a floating miracle. Kria sat lordly in the stern, steering the little craft with a heavy wooden paddle, while two sweating and straining Sâkai punted her forward against the rush of the current. He wore the loose blouse, serviceable short pants, huddled, many-coloured waist-cloth, and the variegated cotton head-kerchief which constitute the costume of the average up-country Malay; but judged by debased, local standards, Solomon in all his glory could hardly be held to owe a heavier debt of gratitude to his tailor. The two men who worked his boat, for example, wore nothing save a dirty strip of bark-cloth twisted carelessly about their loins, more, it would appear, for the advantage of having about the person something into which to stick a wood-knife or a tobacco-bamboo than to subserve any end connected with propriety. Their bodies were scaly with leprous-looking skin-disease, and the shaggy shocks of their hair stood out around their heads in regrettable halos. They were smeared with the grey dust of wood-ashes, for it is the manner of these hill-folk to go to bed in their fire-places, whereof the smoke, as their own proverb has it, is their coverlet. This, on their lips, is not a complaint, but a boast. Standards of comfort differ widely, and the Sâkai, simple soul, is genuinely impressed by the extraordinary convenience of thus being able to keep warm o' nights.

Suddenly, as the canoe crept round a bend in the bank, something plunged headlong out of the shadows and dived into the forest on the left. It leaped with a speed so startling, and was swallowed up so instantly, that it was gone before Kria had time even to reach for his musket; but the Sâkai boatmen, who, like the rest of their people, had the gift of sight through the back of their heads, at once set up a succession of queer, animal calls and cries which spluttered off presently into the hiccoughing monosyllables which serve these folk as speech. A moment later a clear, bell-like call trilled from out the forest, so close at hand that the surprise of it made Kria jump and nearly drop his paddle; and then came a ripple of words, like little drops of crystal, which made even the rude Sâkai tongue a thing of music, freshness, and youth. Next the shrubs on the bank were parted by human hands, and Pi-Noi—Breeze of the Forest—emerging suddenly, stepped straightway into Kria's life and into the innermost heart of him.

She was a Sâkai girl of about fifteen years of age, naked save for a girdle of dried, black water-weed, a string of red berries round her neck, and a scarlet blossom stuck in her hair. She stood there, poised lightly upon her feet, in the agile pose which enables the jungle-folk instantly to convert absolute immobility into a wondrous activity. Her figure, just budding into womanhood, was perfect in every line, from the slender neck to the rounded hips, the cleanly shaped limbs and the small, delicate feet, the whole displayed with a divine unconsciousness which is above mere modesty.

Her skin, smooth as velvet and with much the same downy softness of surface, was an even yellow-brown. without fleck or blemish, and upon it diamond-points of water glistened in the sunlight. Her black and glossy hair was twisted carelessly into a magnificent knot at the nape of her neck, little rounded curls straying here and there to soften cheek and forehead. Her face, an oval of great purity, glowed with youth and life. Her lips had something of the pretty pout of childhood. Her chin was firmly modelled; her nose was straight. with nostrils rather wide, quivering and sensitive; her little ears nestled beneath the glory of her hair.

But it was the eyes of this child which chiefly seized and

held the attention. Marvellously large and round, they were black as night, with irises set in whites that had a faint blue tinge, and with well-defined, black eyebrows arching above them. Their expression was one rarely seen in the human face, though it may be noted now and again in the eyes of wild creatures which have learned to know and partially to trust mankind. It was at once shy and bold, inviting and defiant; friendly, too, within limits; but, above all, watchful and on the alert for flight or for defence at the least hint of danger Her gaze was bent upon Kria, and it seemed to him the most alluring thing that he had ever seen. As he looked, he caught his breath with an audible gasp of astonishment and delight.

Love-at-first-sight is a disease very prevalent in Asia, for with the Oriental the lust of the eye is ever the mightiest of forces, and the sorry pretence that the mind rules the passions is not recognised by him as a tenet subscription to which is demanded by self-respect. The Malays name it "*the* madness," and by this Kria now was smitten, suddenly and without warning, as men sometimes are stricken down by the stroke of a vertical sun. Pi-Noi might be a daughter of the despised jungle-folk, an infidel, an eater of unclean things, a creature of the forest almost as wild as the beasts with which she shared a common home: but to Kria she was what the first woman was to the first man. She was more. Standing thus upon the river's brink, with her feet in the crystal ripples, with the tangle of vegetation making for her lithe figure a wondrous background, with the sunlight playing in and out of the swaying, green canopy above her head and dappling her clear skin with shifting splashes of brightness and shadow, she symbolised for him the eternal triumph of her sex—the tyrannous, unsought power of woman.

Pi-Noi, after looking curiously at the Malay, spoke to her countrymen in their own language, and Kria, who had acquired a working knowledge of the primitive jungle jargon, answered her himself:—

"We are going up-stream to Chĕ-ba' Pĕr-lau-i. The boat is large and your little body will not sink it. We will bear you with us. Come!"

She looked at him quizzically, and her face was softened by a little ripple of laughter. It was the first time that she

had heard her native tongue spoken with a foreign accent, and the oddity of the thing amused her. Then she stepped lightly into the canoe and squatted in the bow.

The boat resumed its journey up-river, warring with the current—was tugged and hauled over fallen trees and round threatening ridges of rock; was towed up difficult places by long lines of rattan; was manœuvred inch by inch up rapids, where the waters roared furiously; or glided in obedience to the punters along the smooth, sun-dappled reaches; and all that dreamy afternoon Pi-Noi sat in the bow, her back turned to Kria, her face averted. She was almost motionless, yet to the Malay, whose eyes pursued her, she conveyed an extraordinary impression of being at once deeply absorbed and keenly alert. Nothing that was happening, or that had happened recently in the jungle all about her, was hidden from Pi-Noi, though she seemed barely to move her head, and once she lifted her voice in a trilling imitation of a bird's call and was answered at once from both sides of the stream. Though she sat consentingly in Kria's boat, he was subtly conscious that she was, in some strange fashion, an integral part of the forest that surrounded them; that she was a stranger to the life of mankind, as he understood it—the life of folk of his own race, who, at best, are only trespassers upon Nature's vast domain. He held his breath fearfully, possessed by the idea that at any moment this girl might vanish whence she had come, and thereafter be lost to him for ever. He felt her to be as free as the Jungle Breeze, whose name she bore, and as little to be held a prisoner by the hand of man. This added at once a dread and a new attraction to her physical beauty. Kria forgot the inherited contempt of the Malay for the Sâkai, the disgust of the Muhammadan for the devourer of unclean things, the conviction of his people that union with a jungle-dweller is an unspeakable abomination. He only remembered that he was a man, hot with love; that she was a woman, elusive and desirable.

II.

Kria's brief wooing was purely a commercial transaction, in which Pi-Noi herself was the last person anyone dreamed of consulting. The naked jungle-folk who were her papa

and mamma developed unsuspected business aptitude at this juncture of their affairs, the number of knife-blades, cooking-pots, rolls of red twill, flints-and-steels, and the like, which they demanded, maintaining a nice proportion to Kria's growing passion for the girl. As this became hotter day by day, there was little haggling on his part, and presently an amazing sum (from first to last it cannot have fallen far short of fifteen shillings sterling) was paid to Pi-Noi's parents, to their great honour, glory and satisfaction, and during an unforgettable forenoon the Sâkai of all ages and both sexes gorged themselves to repletion at Kria's expense. Then Pi-Noi was placed upon an ant-heap, and a shaggy pack of hiccoughing male relatives girt the place about in attitudes of defence. It was now Kria's task to touch the girl's hand in spite of the resistance of her defenders. This is all that survives among the hill-people of the old-time custom of marriage by capture; and when the bridegroom is one of their own folk it still sometimes happens that he carries a sore and bleeding head and a badly bruised body to his marriage-bed. The bride, at such times, darts hither and thither within the ring of her kinsmen, with real or simulated desire to evade her conqueror, till the latter has the luck to touch her hand or to bring her to the ground by a well-aimed blow from his club.

Kria, however, had an unusually easy time of it, for the Sâkai hold all Malays in awe, and Pi-Noi was hampered by the unaccustomed silk garments with which her husband's generosity had clothed her. Very soon, therefore, Kria, his eyes blazing, gave a great cry as he won a grip upon her wrist, and at once Pi-Noi, in obedience to established custom, submitted herself to his control. Hand in hand, the man and wife sped across the clearing in the direction of the river, with a string of hooting, gesticulating, shock-headed, naked savages trailing out behind them. Below the high bank Kria's canoe was moored, and leaping into her, they pushed out into mid-stream. Then the current caught them; the dug-out became suddenly a thing instinct with life; a bend hid the Sâkai camp from view; and, amid the immense, hushed stillness of the forest afternoon, these two set out upon the oldest and newest of all pilgrimages.

With the strong current aiding them, they had only a journey of a few hours to make, a time short enough for any

lovers' transit, though Kria was busy steering the boat, and Pi-Noi sat in the bows helping to direct its course by an occasional timely punt. He had won his heart's desire, and the home to which he was bearing his love lay close at hand; yet even during this honeymoon journeying down the clear, rapid-beset river and through the heart of that magnificent wilderness of woodland, Kria had leisure in which to experience the assaults of a mysterious and perplexing jealousy. He was as utterly alone with the girl as if they two were the first or the last of their kind to wander across the face of earth; yet he had an uneasy consciousness that Pi-Noi had companions, invisible and inaudible to him, in whose presence he knew himself to be *de trop*. In spite of her silence and immobility, he knew instinctively that always she was holding intimate commune with animate nature in a language which had its beginning upon the further side of silence. It was not only a tongue which he could not understand: it was a speech which he could not *hear*. It seemed to cleave an abyss between them; to wrench her from his grasp ere ever he had securely won her; to lift her out of his life; to leave him yearning after her with piteous, imploring face up-turned, and impotent, outstretched arms.

Suddenly the thought of this girl's elusiveness shook him with a panic that checked his heart-beats. She was journeying with him now of her own free will, but what if her will should veer? What if the lures of the jungle should prove too strong for such spells as his poor love and longing could lend him wit to work? What if that cruel wilderness whence she had come should yawn and once more engulf her? As Kria steered the boat with mechanical skill, and, watching the girl with hungry eyes, knew himself to be by her totally forgotten, he experienced with new force and reason the dread which alloys the delight of many a lover even in the supreme moment of possession —the haunting terror of loss. Kria went in fear, not only of Time and Death, those two grim highwaymen who lie in wait for love: there was also the Forest. Every last, least twig of it, every creature that moved unseen beneath its shade, was his enemy, and it was through long files of such foemen that he bore the bride they threatened to ravish from him. And thus—the girl abstracted and aloof, the

man a prey to besetting, though as yet vaguely formulated, fears—Kria and Pi-Noi wended their way down-stream, through the wonder of the tropical afternoon, to begin in their new home the difficult experiment of married life.

III.

Pi-Noi was very much a child, and, childlike, she found delight in new toys. The palatial house which now was hers; the wealth of cooking-pots; the beautiful Malay silks which Kria had given to her; the abundance of good food, and Kria's extravagant kindness, were all new and very pleasant things. She was playing at being a Malay housewife with all the elaborate make-believe which is a special faculty of the child-mind. She would load her small body with gay clothes, clamp ornaments of gold about her wrists, stick long silver pins in her glossy hair, and strut about, laughing rapturously at this new, fantastic game. But throughout she was only mimicking Malayan ways for her own distraction and amusement: she was not seriously attempting to adapt herself to her husband's conception of femininity. She would often cross-question Kria as to the practices of his women-folk, and would immediately imitate their shining example with a humorous completeness. This pleased him, for he interpreted all this irresponsible child's-play as the pathetic efforts of a woman to fulfil the expectations of the man she loves.

The illusion was short-lived. Very soon Pi-Noi, the novelty of her new grandeur wearing thin, began to be irked by the tyranny of Malayan garments. All her life she had gone nude, with lithe limbs fetterless as the wings of a bird. For a space the love of personal adornment, which is implanted in the heart of even the most primitive of feminine creatures, did battle with bodily discomfort; but the hour came when ease defeated vanity. Kria, returning home from a short trip up-stream, found his wife, who did not expect him, clothed only in her water-weed girdle, lying prone in the sun-baked dust before their dwelling, crooning a strange ditty to herself, and kicking two rebellious, bare legs joyously in the air.

He was horribly shocked and outraged; for though a naked Sâkai girl was one of the commonest sights in the

valley, this girl was his wife, and he had been hugging to his heart the belief that she was rapidly developing into a decorous Malayan lady. Also his eye, which had become accustomed to see her clad with the elaborate modesty of his own women-kind, saw in her pristine nudity an amazing impropriety. Feeling wrathful and disgraced, he rushed at her and tried to seize her, but she leaped to her feet in the twinkling of an eye and eluded him with forest-bred ease. He brought up short, panting hard, after an inglorious chase; and much petting, coaxing and pleading were needed before he could lure her back into the house and persuade her to don even one short Malayan waist-skirt. He had to fight his every instinct, for he longed to take a stick to her, being imbued with the Malay man's unshakable belief in the ability of the rod to inspire in a wife a proper sense of subordination; but he did not dare. Malayan women accept such happenings with the meekness which experience reserves for the inevitable; but in the forest Pi-Noi had a protector—a protector who never left her.

The compromise of the short waist-skirt duly effected, things again went on smoothly for a space. Kria suspected that Pi-Noi broke the inadequate compact unblushingly whenever he was absent; but he loved the girl more madly every day, and was not looking for trouble, if it might by any means be shirked.

Some ten days later another incident occurred to break upon his peace. Pi-Noi, in common with all the people of her race and other nocturnal animals, was a restless bed-fellow, waking at frequent intervals through the night, and being given at such times to prowling about the house in search of scraps of food to eat and tobacco to smoke. Kria detested this peculiarity, since it emphasised the difference of race and of degrees of civilisation which yawned between him and his wife, but he ignored it until one evening, when he had waked to find her gone, and had wide-eyed awaited her return for something over an hour. Then he went in search of her.

He hunted through the hut in vain; passed to the door, and finding it open, climbed down the stair-ladder into the moonlit night. A big fire had been lighted that evening, to the windward of the house, in order that the smoke might drive away the sand-flies, and in the warm, raked-out wood-

ashes Kria found his wife. She was sleeping "as the devils sleep," with her little, perfectly-formed body, draped only by the offending girdle, stretched at ease upon its breast, and with her face nestling cosily upon her folded arms. All about her the soft, grey ashes were heaped, and her skin was seen, even in the moonlight, to be plastered thickly with great smears of the stuff. To Kria, a Malay of the Malays, whose only conception of comfort, propriety and civilisation was that prevailing among his people, this discarding of his roof-tree, this turning of the back upon decency and cleanliness and convention, was an incomprehensible madness, but also an act of unspeakable perversity and naughtiness. White with anger, he looked at the sleeping girl, and even as he looked, warned by the marvellous jungle-instinct, she awoke with a leap that bore her a dozen feet away from him. One glance she cast at his set face, then plunged headlong into covert.

Wrath died down within him on the instant, and was replaced by a great fear. Frantically he ran to the spot where she had vanished, calling upon her by name. In vain search he wandered to the edge of the clearing, and so out into the forest, pleading with her to return, vowing that he would not harm a hair of her head, cajoling, entreating, beseeching, and now and again breaking forth into uncontrollable rage and threat. All night he sought for her. The cold, grey dawn, creeping up through banks of mist, to look chillingly upon a dew-drenched world, found him, with blank despair in his heart, with soaked clothes and sodden flesh tattered by the jungle thorns, making his way back to his empty house with the plodding pain of a man in a nightmare. A last hope was kindled as he drew near—the hope that Pi-Noi might have crept homeward while he wandered through the night looking for her—but it flickered up for an instant only to die, as the fire had died above the grey ashes which still bore the imprint of her little body.

Kria, sitting lonely in his hut, looked forth upon a barren world, and saw how desolate is life when love has fled.

IV.

As soon as Kria had pulled himself together sufficiently to enable him to think out a course of action, he set off

for the Sâkai camp, whence he had taken his wife; but her people had, or professed to have, no news of her. She had always been *lîar*, they averred—more *lîar* even than the rest of her people. (*Lîar* means "wild," as animals which defy capture are wild.)

"The portals of the jungle are open to her," said her father indifferently. He was squatting on the ground, holding between his crooked knees a big, conical, basket-work fish-trap which he was fashioning. He spoke thickly through half a dozen lengths of rattan which he held in his mouth, the ends hanging down on either side like a monstrous and disreputable moustache, and he did not so much as raise his eyes to look at his son-in-law. "She will come to no harm," he grunted. "Perhaps presently she will return."

But Kria did not want his wife "presently" or "perhaps"; he wanted her now, at once, without a moment's delay. He explained this to the assembled Sâkai with considerable vehemence.

"That which is in the jungle is in the jungle," they said oracularly. Folk who are *lîar*, they explained, are very difficult to catch, resent capture, and if brought back before their wander-lust is an expended passion, are very apt to run away again. Then the laborious business of tracking and catching them has to be undertaken anew, to the immense fatigue and annoyance of everyone concerned. It is better, they urged, to let such people grow weary of the jungle at their leisure: then, in the fullness of time, they will return of their own free will.

The limitations of their intellects and vocabularies made it impossible for the Sâkai to express themselves quite as clearly as this, but the above represents the gist of their dispassionate opinions. They took several torturing hours and innumerable monosyllables to explain them to Kria, who gnashed and raved in his impatience.

"Pi-Noi is so excessively *lîar*," said that young woman's mamma, speaking with a sort of dreamy indifference while, with noisy nails, she tore at her scaly hide. "She is so incurably *lîar* that it would be better, *Inche'*, to abandon her to the jungle and to take one of her sisters to wife in her stead. Jag-ok[a] here," she added, indicating with outthrust chin a splay-faced little girl who, in awful fashion,

was cleaning fish with her fingers, "Jag-ok^n is hardly to be called *lîar* at all. Besides, she hates being beaten, and if you use a rod to her, she would make, I am convinced, a very obedient and amenable wife. We will let you have Jag-ok^n very cheap—say half the price you paid for Pi-Noi, her sister."

But Kria did not want Jag-ok^n, who was ill-favoured and covered from tip to toe with skin diseases, at any price at all. He wanted her sister, who was still to him the only woman in the world. The slack indifference of the Sâkai maddened him, and in the end he threatened to trounce his father-in-law soundly if that worthy elder did not forthwith aid him in tracking the recalcitrant Pi-Noi.

In an instant -Gap, the Rhinoceros, as Pi-Noi's papa was named, was standing before Kria, shaking as a leaf is shaken, for the Sâkai's inherited fear of the Malay is an emotion which has for its justification a sound historical basis. Immediately the whole camp was in turmoil; the danger-call was sounding; and those of the Sâkai to whom escape was open were melting into the forest as swiftly and as noiselessly as flitting shadows. Â-Gap and two younger men, however, squealing dismally, were clutched by their frowsy elf-locks, hustled on board Kria's canoe, and soon were paddling rapidly down-stream in the direction of his house. The hour of their arrival was too late for anything further to be done that day, so Kria spent a miserable night, and awoke next morning to find that the three Sâkai had disappeared. They had cut a hole in the bamboo floor, and had dropped noiselessly through it on to the earth beneath, what time Kria had been tossing upon the mat which he had placed athwart the doorway. They had arrived at two conclusions: firstly, that Kria was mad, which made him a highly undesirable companion; and, secondly, that if he caught Pi-Noi he would very certainly kill her. They were convinced of his insanity because he was making such an absurd fuss about the recovery of a particular girl, when all the time, as everybody knew, there were hundreds and hundreds of others, just as good, to be had for the asking. Their reasonable fears for Pi-Noi's safety were based upon the argument that a person who would beat a man would certainly kill a woman. On the whole, they concluded, it would be at once more wholesome

and more pleasant to go away now, and to avoid Kria for the future.

Kria, unaided, tried some very amateurish tracking on his own account, his great love setting at naught the Malay's instinctive horror of entering the jungle unaccompanied. He succeeded only in getting hopelessly bushed, and at last won his way back to his house, almost by a miracle. He was worn out with anxiety and fatigue, foot-sore, heart-sore, weary soul and body, and nearly starved to death. The Sakâi seemed to have vanished from the forest for twenty miles around; his trading was at a standstill; he was humiliated to the dust; and his utter impotence was like a load of galling fetters clamped about his soul. Yet all the while his love of Pi-Noi and his hungry longing for her were only intensified by her absence and her heartlessness. He missed her—was haunted by the sound of her voice—was tortured by elusive wraiths of her which emerged suddenly to mock him from the forest's pitiless depths.

V.

The moon had been near the full on the night when the wander-lust, as the Sâkai called it, had come to Pi-Noi. A little crescent was hanging just above the forest in the wake of the sunset before Kria received any hint of her continued existence. Returning one evening to his house from a visit to his fish-weir, he found on the threshold a small heap of jungle-offerings—wild *dûri-an* and other fruit, the edible shoot of the *îbul* palm, and a collection of similar miscellaneous trash. At this sight the blood flew to Kria's face, then stormed back into a heart that pumped and leaped. These things shouted their meaning in his ears.

Trembling with joyful agitation, Kria passed to the inner room of the house, and examined Pi-Noi's little store of clothes. Not only a silk waist-cloth, but a long blouse, such as Malayan women wear as an upper garment, were missing. Evidently Pi-Noi was bent upon doing the thing handsomely now that she had decided upon submission, and to that end was pandering with a generous completeness to his absurd prejudices on the subject of wearing

apparel. Also she must be close at hand, for it was unlikely that she would stray far into the jungle clad in those delicate silks.

Pi-Noi's surrender was an instant victory for her. No sooner had Kria made his discovery than, with a wildly beating heart he was standing in the doorway, calling softly, in a voice that shook and failed him, using a pet name known only to Pi-Noi and to himself. All his rage, all his humiliations, all his sufferings were forgotten. He only knew that Pi-Noi had come back to him, and that all at once he was thankful and tearful and glad.

"Chêp!" (Little Bird!) he cried. "Chêp! Are you there, Fruit of my Heart? Come to me, Little One! Come, O come!"

From somewhere in the brushwood near at hand came the sound of musical laughter—the laughter of a woman who knows her power, and finds in its tyrannous exercise a triumph and a delight.

"Is there space in the house for me?" she inquired demurely, tilting her head and gazing at him in mockery, while again a ripple of light laughter broke from her lips. "Or shall I go to my other house, . . . the forest?"

Kria, his withers wrung by the conviction of her elusiveness and his own impotence, tortured, too, by a fear lest even now some capricious perversity might induce her again to desert him, could only stammer out wild protestations of love and welcome. The girl was thoroughly aware that she was complete mistress of the situation, and even Kria was tempted to believe that he, not she, was the wrong-doer. In moments of rage, during her absence, he had often promised himself that, if he ever laid hands upon her again, he would give her the very soundest whipping that the forest had ever seen administered to an erring wife; but now these vows were forgotten. All he desired was to have her back, on any terms, at any price, at no matter what sacrifice of pride, of honour, of self-respect. Even in that instant of passion and emotion he saw, though dimly, that this woman was killing his soul.

Reassured at last as to the amiability of Kria's intentions, Pi-Noi drew near him after the manner of other wild forest creatures, her every muscle braced for flight; and then she was in his arms, and he had borne her up the

stair-ladder with infinite tenderness, crooning and weeping over her with broken words of love.

VI.

Thus began the years of Kria's slavery—only three little years of life, as men count time, but an eternity, no less, if judged by the number and violence of the emotions packed within them. While they lasted, periods of almost delirious delight alternated with seasons of acute mental suffering and moral struggle. Sometimes for six weeks or more at a time Pi-Noi would live contentedly under his roof, and he would strive to trick himself into the belief that the wander-lust was dead in her. Then, upon a certain day, his watchful eyes would note a subtle change. She would be lost to him, sitting in the doorway of the hut with parted lips, while into her eyes there crept a dreamy, far-away mystery. The depths of her absorption would be so profound that she would take no heed of words addressed to her; and Kria would know, in his miserable heart, that she was listening to the voices which begin upon the further side of silence, and was holding inaudible commune with the forest world. He would guard her then stealthily, sleeplessly, so that his business was neglected, and his body was parched with the fever bred of anxiety and want of rest; but sooner or later nature would overcome him, and he would awake with a shock from the sleep of exhaustion to see Pi-Noi's scattered garments heaped about the floor, and to find that the girl herself had once more eluded his vigilance.

Then would pass weeks of misery, of fierce jealousy, of rage, of longing, of fear—for he was racked always by the dread lest this time she should not come back. But through all he loved her, hating and crying shame upon himself because of his love; and so often as she returned to him, so often was her sinning ignored. He dared not punish her with word or blow. The forest was her ally and his bitter enemy. It afforded her a refuge too accessible, secure and final.

It was during one of these periods of anguish that Kria received the first visit that had been paid to him by men of his own breed since his arrival in the valley. After days of watchfulness Pi-Noi had eluded him that morning, a

little before the dawn, and when Kria had awaked from slumberings which had been a mere ravel of nightmares, it had been to the knowledge that the grim forest had swallowed her, and that yet another season of misery, of torturing imaginings, and of suspense lay before him. A couple of hours later his unexpected visitors arrived.

The party consisted of three Malays—Kûlop Rîau, a native of Pêrak, who in those days was reputed to be the most noted master of jungle-lore in the Peninsula, and two young men from the Jĕlai valley in Pahang. They had come to search for gutta in the forests of the Tĕlom, and for loot in the Sâkai camps.

With the frankness which distinguishes Malays, and a lonely man's craving for sympathy, Kria forthwith related to these strangers the story of his married life and all the ignominy which was his, at the same time asking their advice as to the action which he might most fittingly take. Kûlop Rîau was cynical.

"She is only a Sâkai," he said. "Why do you not kill her and thereafter seek a wife among the maidens of the Jĕlai Valley. That were more proper than to suffer yourself to be thus villainously entreated by this jungle-wench."

Krai hung his head. He could not bring himself to reveal the shameful secret of his love; but Kûlop Rîau, whose experiences were not confined to the forest, looked at him and understood.

"These jungle hussies," he declared with the dogmatic assertion proper to an expert. "These jungle hussies are often deeply skilled in witchcraft, and it is plainly to be discerned that this wench has cast a glamour over you. Brother, I apprehend that it would be wise to slay her, for your soul's sake, as speedily as may be, else surely you will be a thrall to her magic in life, and in death you will most unquestionably go to stoke the fires of the Terrible Place. Therefore, it were wise and wholesome and not unpleasant to kill her with as much speed, thoroughness and circumspection as may be possible."

But Kria, who loved the girl, not only in spite of her heartlessness, but *because* she so tortured him, would have naught of counsels such as this. If Pi-Noi had abided with him after the constant fashion of other wives, it is possible that his passion would have spent itself, and their

union have become a mere embodiment of the commonplace. Despite her beauty and grace, he might easily have grown weary of this woman of a lesser breed if he had ever possessed her utterly, but the very insecurity of his tenure of her lent to her an added and irresistible fascination.

Something of this, vaguely and gropingly, was forced upon the understanding of old Kûlop Rîau, who was thereby completely convinced of the accuracy of his original diagnosis. That the witch should be a Sakâi, an eater of unclean things, foredoomed in common with all her race to burn eternally in Hell by the wise decree of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate, and that her victim should be a Malay and True Believer, shocked his every racial and religious prejudice. Though, on his own account, he had constant dealings with jungle demons—the which is an abomination—he suddenly recalled the fact that he was a Muhammadan, and as such recognised that Kria's position was at once humiliating and highly improper.

"In any event, it were well to know how she passes the days during which the jungle claims her," he said. "It seems to me that this hussy has kept you too long in ignorance of the naughtiness of her heart, the degradation and ignominy of her behaviour, and the extraordinary vileness and impropriety of her carriage."

"I would very willingly learn why she thus leaves me and what she does at such seasons," said poor Kria. "But the forests are vast, and she vanishes into their depths even as a stone sinks through still waters and is lost to sight. She is one of the wild things of the jungle, and if she has a mind to keep her secret, who shall wrest it from her?"

"It is very plainly to be seen, brother, that you are village-bred," said Kûlop Rîau with immense contempt. "The portals of the jungle are not flung wide for you. The Spectre Huntsman and the Forest Fiends do not count you among the tale of their children. If this were not so. . . . But the thing is too simple to demand explanation!"

"But you . . ." cried Kria breathlessly. "You, could you track her? Could you answer for me all these intolerable questions?"

"That could I, and with ease, were I minded to take so much trouble," said Kûlop scornfully. "But I have come hither to transact business of mine own. However,

such is the love I bear you, little brother" (the two had met for the first time that day) "that I might turn me aside from mine own affairs to do you this service—at a price."

The concluding words awoke Kria's keen commercial instincts, and a very pretty piece of haggling forthwith ensued. But even here Pi-Noi shackled him. He loved her, and his necessity was old Kûlop's opportunity, as that astute worthy very perfectly perceived; wherefore the price, paid in rubber, which Kria drew with many sighs from his hoarded store, proved in the end to be frankly extortionate. He longed to lay at rest, once for all, the cruel ghosts of the imagination which had haunted him, but now that the chance of discovery had come to him, he was oppressed by terror at the thought of what it might reveal.

Time was precious if Pi-Noi's trail was to be struck while it was still fresh, and a short hour sufficed for preparations. Then the party, Kûlop Rîau leading, with his long muzzle-loader on his shoulder, Kria following, and the two Jĕlai youngsters bringing up the rear, left the clearing and entered the forest. Old Kûlop had made a cast round the clearing while the others were busy packing the rice and the cooking-pots, and he had hit off the line which Pi-Noi had taken at the first attempt. A trail once struck by a man of Kûlop's skill and knowledge of forest-lore, few accidents less efficient than an earthquake or a cyclone would suffice to check or stay him.

VII.

Pi-Noi's spoor proved at the first singularly clear. She had so long been convinced of her complete immunity from pursuit that she had become careless, and had made use of none of the precautions for the confusion of her trail such as are supplied by the baffling woodcraft of her people. This was as well, and saved the trackers much time; for the very existence of the Sâkai, it must be remembered, has depended for hundreds of years upon their ability to evade Malay slave-hunters.

At a distance of some eight miles from her starting-point (it took Kûlop Rîau and his party nearly five hours to reach it) she had stopped in a little open glade of the

forest to dance ecstatically with her slender, bare feet upon the rich, cool grasses beside a stream, which tumbled downward, with a mighty chattering, in the direction of the Tĕlom. Here she had bathed luxuriously in the running water, had stretched herself to enjoy a sun-bath upon a flat rock in mid-stream, and thence had pounced upon and captured with her hands a huge, fruit-eating *krai* fish. She had carried the creature ashore, had cleaned it and scraped off its great scales, had pulled some rattan from the jungle, and had fashioned therefrom a knapsack into which she had stowed the fish. Thereafter she had climbed a *hŧbiscus* to rob it of its blossoms for her hair, had danced again in sheer joy of being alive, and then had continued her wanderings.

The tracks, as old Kûlop Rîau pointed them out to Kria, one by one, told the story of this little halting with such distinctness of detail that Pi-Noi's husband could picture to himself every act and motion of his wayward wife; could almost visualise her, alone and wild with joy, in that hidden nook of the jungle; and found himself understanding for the first time something of the exaltation and exhilaration of spirit that had been hers as she entered once more into her birthright of forest freedom.

At this point Kûlop Rîau found it difficult to pick up the trial afresh. He took wide casts up and down stream, examining both banks closely, but for near an hour he was at fault. He quested like a hound, his shoulders hunched, his head low-stooping from his thick neck, his eyes intent, fixed for the most part on the ground, but throwing now and again quick glances to the right or left. All the while he maintained with himself a monotonous, unintelligible, mumbled monologue. Kria, following him closely and straining his ears to listen, could catch here and there a familiar word, but the speech as a whole was an archaic jargon from which no single strand of connected thought was to be unravelled, and the old tracker was to all seeming deaf to the eager questions addressed to him.

The Jĕlai lads, shuddering a little, whispered to Kria that the Jungle Demons had entered into and possessed the body of the old tracker, and one of them fell to repeating the names of Allah and his Prophet fearfully, under his breath. It was a nerve-sawing experience to find oneself thus

cast away in the trackless forest with this inspired demoniac for one's sole guide and leader; but Kria was not greatly impressed. He knew Pi-Noi.

At last, about a mile up-stream, Kûlop Rîau suddenly became rigid as a pointer, and stood glaring at a spot on the left bank where a hanging leaf oozed sap from a bruised twig. He broke forth into a low rumble of unintelligible gibberish, and drew himself with many grunts out of the bed of the stream. No other sign of Pi-Noi's passage was visible to his companions, but Kûlop Rîau, though he still muttered ceaselessly, trudged forward now with confidence. A quarter of a mile further on he drew Kria's attention, by a gesture, to a tiny mucous smear on the bark of a tree. The fish, bulging through the meshes of the knapsack, had left that mark. The trail was Pi-Noi's.

The afternoon was now far advanced, and when next he struck a stream, Kûlop called a halt and bade his companions cook the evening meal. He himself crossed the rivulet and entered the forest beyond, returning later with word that the trail was easier over yonder, and that he had learned its general trend.

The meal was eaten almost in silence, for Kûlop Rîau, when possessed by his Jungle Spirits, was an awe-inspiring companion. Kria and the Jĕlai lads, too, were fagged and weary, but since the moon was near the full, their leader would not suffer them to rest. Pi-Noi had gained a long start of them, which they must try to recover.

Kria, worn out body and soul, was racked by an agony of baffled curiosity as he stumbled on and on, and watched the old tracker bristling, with many growls and grumblings, over each fresh secret that the spoor revealed to him. It was evident that he was reading in the invisible signs which he alone had the power to interpret, some story that excited him strangely, but he did not heed and seemed not even to hear the eager questions with which Kria plied him.

About midnight he called a halt.

"There is still plenty of light," Kria protested.

"Here we will camp," Kûlop Rîau reiterated with a snarl.

"But——" Kria began, when the other cut him short.

"When you are in child-bed, do as the midwife bids you," he said; and ten minutes later the old man was fast

asleep, though even in his slumber he still muttered restlessly.

The dawn broke wan and cheerless, the feeble daylight thrusting sad and irresolute fingers through the network of bough and leaf overhead. A dank, chill, woebegone depression hung over the wilderness. The riot and the glory of the night were ended: the long ordeal of the hot and breathless day was about to begin. The forest was settling itself with scant content to its uneasy slumbering.

After the manner of all jungle-people, Kûlop Rîau awoke with the dawn, and an hour later the morning rice had been cooked and eaten. The old tracker prepared himself a quid of betel-nut with great deliberation, and sat chewing it mechanically, his body swinging slowly to and fro, his eyes nearly closed, his lips busy, though none save vague sounds came from them. Kria, watching him with growing irritation, for a while was fearful to disturb him; but at last, unable longer to endure the delay and suspense, he burst out with an eager question.

"When do we take up the trail anew?" he asked.

Kûlop Rîau, coming up to the surface slowly from the depths of his abstraction, gazed at Kria for a space through unseeing eyes, while the question that had been spoken filtered through the clouds obscuring his brain. Then he jerked out an answer of five words:—

"When you are in child-bed!" and closed his mouth with a snap, not even troubling himself to complete the proverb.

Once more Kria knew himself to be impotent. Here again he had no course open to him but to sit and wait.

The long, still, stifling day wore toward evening, minute by minute and hour by hour, while the four men lay under the shelter of a rough lean-to of thatch, inactive but restless, and Kria thought bitterly of the amount and value of the rubber which he in his folly and trustfulness had handed over to Kûlop Rîau in advance. Late in the afternoon that worthy spoke to his companions for the first time for many hours, bidding them prepare food, and a little before the sunset, after the meal had been despatched, he rose to his feet, hiccoughed loudly, stretched himself elaborately, and made ready to resume his march. In an instant Kria was

by his side, with an expression of joyful relief, but Kûlop told him curtly to bide where he was.

"This time," he said, "I go forward alone. One may not scout in this forest with three pairs of feet crashing through the underwood at one's heels like a troop of wild kine. Stay here till I return."

Without another word, he lounged off, with his long musket over his shoulder, and was soon lost to view. He went, as the Sâkai themselves go, flitting through the trees as noiselessly as a bat.

"Did I not say truly that he is possessed by the Demons of the Forest?" said one of the Jĕlai youths. "*Ya Allah!* Fancy going into this wilderness alone for choice, and with the darkness about to fall!"

Thereafter followed for Kria a miserable night, for while the Jĕlai lads slept beside him, he lay awake, a prey to a thousand torturing thoughts and memories, and oppressed by a load of vague forebodings.

VIII.

Kria awoke in broad daylight to find old Kûlop Rîau, his dew-drenched clothes soiled with the earth of the jungle, bending over him with a light of wild excitement and exultation blazing in his eyes.

"Come, brother," he said. "I have found the wench. Come!"

Without another word, he turned away into the forest, Kria following him as best he might, binding about his waist as he ran the belt from which hung his heavy wood-knife.

Kûlop strode along at a great pace for a matter of two or three miles, now and again directing Kria's attention to some trifling mark on earth or trunk or shrub which told of the passing of Pi-Noi.

"See here, brother," he said, indicating a place where the grass had much the appearance of a large hare's form. "There was one awaiting her. He sat there for a long time, listening for her coming, and there was much joy in that meeting. Behold here, and here, and here, how they

danced together, as young fawns caper and leap—the hussy, your wife, and this youth of her own people. Like goes to like, brother, and a wild woman seeks ever a wild man, in no wise respecting the laws of wedlock. This wench has betrayed you. See, here they cooked food, yams of his gathering and the fish that she had brought, and he fashioned a nose-flute to make beast-noises with, and thereafter there was more dancing, ere they bathed together in the stream, the shameless ones! and moved forward again, heading always for the Great Salt-Lick."

Kria, rent by devils of jealousy and rage, his face drawn and ghastly, his hands opening and clenching convulsively, said never a word; but his eyes took in each detail of the story recorded by the clear imprints upon grass and earth, and the yielding mud at the river's brink. Mechanically he followed Kûlop Rîau when the latter once more dived into the underwood.

"From this point," the old man was saying, "I abided no longer by the trail. They were making for the Great Salt-Lick, and thither went I by a circuitous path of mine own contrivance. This time we go by a shorter route. Come."

Five miles further on the forest thinned out suddenly and gave place to an irregular space, roughly circular in shape, the surface of which resembled a ploughed field. Though the red soil was rich, barely so much as a tuft of grass grew upon it—a strange sight in a land where green things sprout into lusty life almost as you watch them; for this was one of the natural saline deposits, not infrequently found in Malayan jungles. Hither flock all the beasts of the forest, from the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the tiger to the red dogs, the tiny mouse-deer, no larger than a rabbit, and even the stoats and weasels, to lick the salt and to knead and trample the earth with countless pads and claws and hoofs.

Kria looked out upon the place, and as he looked his heart stood still, while for a moment all things were blotted out in a blinding, swirling mist of blood-stained darkness. He reeled against a trunk, and stood there sobbing and shaking ere he could muster force to look again.

At the foot of a big tree some twenty yards away, the body of Pi-Noi, its aspect strangely delicate and childlike,

lay coiled up in death. There was a little blue hole below her left breast where the cruel bullet had entered, and the wild swine and the hungry red dogs had already been busy.

Kria, reeling like a drunken man, staggered across the open space toward the dead body of his wife. Kûlop Rîau stood looking on with the air of a craftsman surveying his masterpiece.

Dazed and broken-hearted, Kria stood for a space gazing down upon his wife's peaceful face. It seemed to him as though she slept, as he so often had seen her sleeping in that house to which her fitful presence had brought such an intoxication of delight; and suddenly all anger was dead within him, and there surged up in its place all manner of tender and endearing memories of this dead girl who had been to him at once his torture and his joy.

With a face livid and working, he turned savagely upon Kûlop Rîau.

"And the man," he cried. "What of the man?"

"He lies yonder," said Kûlop Rîau, with the triumphant air of an artist whose work can defy criticism, and he pointed with his chin, Malayan fashion, in the direction of a clump of bush near the edge of the Salt-Lick. "I shot him as he fled. See, they were camped for the night in the man-nest which they had built for themselves in the tree-fork up there, animals and strangers to modesty that they were!" He expectorated emphatically in token of his unutterable disgust.

Kria strode to the spot, gazed for an instant, and then gave a great cry of pain and rage and misery.

"The man is her brother," he yelled. "And you—you have killed her who was guiltless of all sin!"

"Is that so?" said Kûlop calmly. "Then, very certainly, it was so decreed by Fate, the inscrutable, and by Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Also you are well rid of this jungle hussy who, in the end, would, beyond all doubt, have dragged your soul to . . . Have done! Let be! Are you mad? Arrrrgh . . ."

But Kûlop Rîau spoke no other word in life.

When the Jĕlai lads tracked and found them, both men were dead and stiff. Kûlop still grasped the wood-knife, which he had plunged again and again into Kria's body; but the latter's fingers were locked in the old tracker's throat in

a grip which, even in death, no force could relax. None the less, though they could not separate them, they buried them both—since they were Muhammadans and, as such, claimed that service at the hands of their fellows. But Pi-Noi's little body they left to the beasts of the forest which in life had been her playmates.

The Poetry of Francis Thompson

By Austin Harrison

It is with feelings of tender memory that one buys the three volumes of Francis Thompson's works, given to the world with such loving care by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, to whom all honour is due. To me they are of particular interest; as a phenomenon not only in art, but in the ethical idea, whether it be called Neo-Catholicism or religious mysticism, for which Thompson stood, like an Archimandrite. He is essentially the English Catholic poet. As he himself wrote in *Form and Formalism*, "out of all (life's) disintegrations and confusion earth emerges, like a strong though baffled swimmer, nearer to the unseen model and term of all social growth; which is the civil constitution of angeldom, and Uranian * statecraft of imperatorial God." And the phrase is characteristic of his wordy thought and utterance.

Mysticism, of course, is not amenable to criticism which can only deal with the concrete, and it is at once its weakness and its power. Hence the superfœtation of praise of Thompson's poetry on the one side, the suspect attitude on the other, or the difficulty of reconciliation. For Thompson insisted upon the tutelary Presence in all things. He saw life and nature sacerdotally. The philosophy he drew from was the old Catholic philosophy: rigid, *arrêté*, finite. His message was the old omnipresence of divine subjectivity. In a word, he sought to conciliate incompatibilities.

And though it is purely as a poet that I wish to consider Thompson, it is this personification of an arbitrary theology always which obtrudes; for as words are inseparable from ideas, so are ideas inseparable from the vision. Vision, it will be granted, is the supreme test of poetry, but vision itself is infinite. It knows no laws, like space it has no

* Uranian is a favourite word of Thompson, meaning (presumably) celestially sexless.

end. The vision of Francis Thompson was belief which, humanly, is finite, as opposed to knowledge which is infinite. Thus Thompson set out with a self-imposed limit; he was not the propounder of a faith, but the re-creator of a very, very old one. It became his life's task. He subordinated his art to his mission.

To the mystic, to the religionist, Thompson* may naturally be claimed as a great poet. Those of us who can detach art from creed, to whom art itself is the noblest of all religions, may reasonably hesitate. In the vision of the artist we want creation and not dogma; freedom, not theory; the love which is universal; we want personality. Thompson gives us only personification; he pontificates. He is never free to sing, like the lark. His very ecstasy is sacerdotal. His whole imagination is swaddled and gilded with ritualistic imagery and emotion. When he soars, it is into the nebulosity of Liturgy. His rhapsodical Rosicrucianisms (shall I say?) jar. It is not in Heaven that he sings, but of Heaven. Round his intellect always there is the aura of a theological imposition.

Of autumn he says:—

> "Or higher, holier, saintlier when, as now,
> All Nature sacerdotal seems."

Of the sun:—

> "And with confession never done
> Admit the sacerdotal sun."

He thinks of the twilight:—

> "The earth with due illustrious rite
> Blessed—ere the frail fingers featly
> Of twilight, violet-cassocked acolyte,
> His sacerdotal stoles unvest—
> Sets, for high close of the mysterious feast,
> The sun in august exposition meetly
> Within the flaming monstrance of the west."

The sunrise he apostrophises thus:—

> "Lo, in the sanctuaried East,
> Day, a dedicated priest,
> In all his robes pontifical exprest,
> Lifteth slowly, lifteth sweetly,
> From out its orient tabernacle drawn,
> Yon orbéd sacrament confest."

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*The Works of Francis Thompson. 3 vols. Presented by Wilfrid Meynell. (Burns and Oates.)

The beauty of a lady to whom he dedicates his song is epitomised :—

> "Whose spirit sure is lineal to that
> Which sang *Magnificat.*"

And thus a girl :—

> "Authentic cestus of two girdling arms."

In the fine poem to a "Fallen Yew" he sees the tutelary presence :—

> "Its keys are at the cincture hung of God;
> Its gates are trepidant to his nod;
> By Him, its Floors are trod."

And the image is overdone, "churchy," and quite uninspired. Even the little snowdrop is sicklied o'er with ritualistic imagery :—

> "The snowdrop's saintly stoles less heed
> Than the snow-cloistered penance of the seed."

Poor little snowdrop! Does it add to her beauty to coif her with ceremonial symbol? I cannot think so. I like to think of flowers free from all ritualistic vestments. Here is a confession of his philosophy :

> "Though all the windy earth about,
> Quested its secret of the sun,
> And heard what thing the stars together shout,—
> I should not heed thereout,
> Consenting counsel won :—
> "By this, O Singer, know we if thou see.
> When men shall say to thee : Lo! Christ is here,
> When men shall say to thee : Lo! Christ is there,
> Believe them : yea, and this—then art thou seer,
> When all thy crying clear
> Is but : Lo here! lo there!—ah me, lo everywhere!"

One thinks of smoking incense; if it is a hymn, it is not great poetry. See the end of "To a Poet breaking Silence" :—

> "The loom which mortal verse affords,
> Out of weak and mortal words,
> Wovest thou thy singing-weed in,
> To rune of this far Eden.
> Vain are all disguises! Ah,
> Heavenly *incognita!*
> Thy mien betrayeth through that wrong
> The great Uranian House of Song!
> As the vintages of earth
> Taste of the sun that riped their birth,
> We know what never-cadent sun
> Thy lampèd clusters throbbed upon,
> What plumed feet the winepress trod;
> Thy wine is flavorous of God.

Whatever singing-robe thou wear
Has the Paradisal air;
And some gold feather it has kept
Shows what Floor it lately swept."

Winepress, robe, Paradisal, Floor, *incognita*—all this is the windy phraseology of priesthood. The thought in the above quotation is sacerdotal; to the lay mind it conveys little but the rather wordy hugger-mugger of ecclesiastical metaphor. To many, the "Paradisal" air is meaningless, as the idea of Hell is meaningless to the modern mind; but Thompson goes further back still and insists upon the old mediæval Hell:—

"Ah, the ill that we do in tenderness, and the hateful horror of love!
It has sent more souls to the unslaked Pit than it ever will draw above."

Saper lipopette! No, this is too much. Love is the redemption of our lives. Here, again, the modern Christian is pulled up. He believes in human love. Flatly, he denies that love has sent poor human frailty so frequently to the Pit: he denies, *ex cathedra*, the very existence of that place. Thompson, in fact, was no modernist. He speaks sneeringly of science as "old noser in its prideful straw," and *per contra* of the "irrefragable order" of God's thoughts. In the last line of the poem "To the Dead Cardinal of Westminster," he pleads:—

". . . . . Tell!
Lest my feet walk hell."

Which is an ugly line and an ugly thought. At times his passion for sacerdotal phraseology runs complete riot. I take these verses from the poem to "Any Saint":—

"All the Omnific made
When, in a word, he said
(Mystery!)
He uttered *thee*;

"Cosmic metonymy;
Weak world-unshuttering key;
One
Seal of Solomon!"

To my mind sheer word-chaos, unintelligible and ugly. Take again this from "Assumpta Maria":—

"Open wide thy gates, O Virgin,
That the King may enter thee!
At all gates the clangours gurge in,
God's paludament lightens, see!
Camp of Angels! Well, we even
Of this thing may doubtful be,—

If thou art assumed in Heaven,
Or is Heaven assumed to thee!
Consummatum. Christ the promised,
Thy maiden realm, is won, O strong!
Since to such sweet kingdom comest,
Remember me, poor Thief of Song!"

He is always using conventional ecclesiastical terms, such as "gates," as in the same way he drags in Seraphim, Dove-like, and a host of ritualistic stereotyped imagery. I cannot admit this to be in any way superior to the stock ecclesiastical poetastry out of any ordinary hymnal. It is the persistency of this sacerdotal symbolism, metaphor, and jargon that is so exasperating in Thompson, for detach onself as one may, it rises up and shakes its "Uranian censer" (as Thompson might have written) at the reader in almost every poem. In "Her Portrait," for example, certainly one of his finest achievements, we find lines like these:—

"At the rich odours from her heart that rise,
My soul remembers its lost Paradise,
And antenatal gales blow from Heaven's shores of spice;
I grow essential all, uncloaking me
From this encumbering virility,
And feel the primal sex of Heaven and poetry;
And, parting from her, in me linger on
Vague snatches of Uranian antiphon.

"How to the pretty prison could she shrink
Of femininity?—nay, but I think
In a dear courtesy her spirit would
Woman assume, for grace to womanhood.
Or, votaress to the virgin sanctitude
Of reticent withdrawal's sweet, courted pale,
She took the cloistral flesh, the sexual veil,
Of her sad, aboriginal sisterhood;
The habit of cloistral flesh which founding Eve indued."

"Antenatal Gales," "Heaven's shores of spice." What do these things mean? We associate spice with the East, with earthly vanities and desires, scarcely with Heaven, which, again, we do not invest with so material a configuration as a shore. Then antenatal gales—what are those? It is true there is authority for the word. Shelley* used it:—

"And many an antenatal tomb,
Where butterflies dream of the life to come."

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*The Sensitive Plant.

which is intelligible and a legitimate use of the word. Thompson's lines seem to me cacophonic and pointless; indeed, for the life of me I cannot understand the two verses quoted above at all. It is as if Thompson was using words in a bemused state of sacrificial ecstasy, regardless of their literary meaning. Yet again and again the critical sense is held up and repelled by these interpositions of ecclesiastical tropes and solecisms, this Uranian spate of his. In the beautiful poem to "The Poppy," the whole flow is arrested by the outrageous bathos of the line:—

"His great Pentecostal tongue."

And this is typical; the natural art is perpetually frustrated; it ruins the poem. We may pass "the silver-stolèd damsels of the sea," though the image is to me false and artificial, and I can find no beauty in the investiture of the sea with ceremonial habit.

What is one to say to a verse like this, taken from the ode to the Dead Cardinal?—

"Through sacrificial tears,
And anchoritic years,
Tryst
With the sensualist?"

Or this:—

"*You* smelt the Heaven-blossoms,
And all the sweet embosoms
The dear
Uranian year."

"Dear" is, of course, used in the antiquated sense, as in Patmore's sense he uses "spouse." Really, a man needs to shave his head to understand their import. I am not disposed to cavil at Thompson's pluckings from the poets; his Shellyisms—"agaric, antenatal, blossomy"; his derivative obligations to Crawshaw; his Shakespeareanisms—"buss, frush, compost," etc.; his skimmings from Milton, Spencer, or Rossetti; or to judge him the more severely that some of his most memorable lines are not original: thus W. Morris first spoke of "silted memories," and it was Shakespeare who wrote the "beached margent of the sea." A good memory is a treacherous thing. Moreover, there is no patent in words. That Thompson was derivative can hardly be disputed, but he cannot be dubbed a plagiarist. The question is what use he made of words, and here, though I entirely agree with him that "individual freedom is the

English heritage, in letters as in life," I find a continual source of annoyance. I am not referring to his extensive and precious vocabulary, to the German use of hyphened adjectives and nouns, such as "fear-bespresst," to his archaicisms or any of his own inventions, such as the term "Lutany." License is of the breath of poetry; also I am ready to accept what he himself laid down, that "Formalism is the repression of vitality; therefore, let us away from form"—strange as it is that the man who claimed freedom of form should not also seek it in thought. There is no reason, too, why Latinisms should be taboo, why a poet should not employ any good word he pleases, and as many strange ones as he can collect—Skeat and a Webster are positively necessary when reading Thompson—why he should not break away from convention and all poetic imprisonment of fashion and sanction.

It is commonly said of Thompson's poetry that a man either loves or hates it. As criticism, however, that is not sufficient. No one can hate Shelley, though he may hate his Paganism. It is an evasion of criticism to apply the test to Thompson. I wish to say here that I grant Thompson at once vision, the afflatus and equipment of a poet, and above all intellect, for he is never rank or ordinary. But the peculiarities of his poetry are too marked and insistent to be passed over. All the time it "bumps." Like a funambulist of words, he is always trying to "show off." There is its constant and irritating sibilancy, its only too frequent cacophony, and again its turgidity, what I must call its strepitancy, and that despite the swell and grandeur of both metre and conception, as were the poet lacking in the music and beauty of language. It is like an over-gargoyled church.

Here are a few examples of this sibilancy:

"Utter stagnation
Is the solistitial slumber of the spirit."

"Before the first shafts of the sun's onslaught
From gloom's black harness splinter."

"So all the gnashing jaws, the leaping heads
Of hungry menaces, and of ravening dreads
Of pangs
Switch-lipped, with quivering nostrils and immitigate
Fangs.

"I scourge beneath the torment of my charms;
That their repentless nature fear to work thee harms.
And as yon Apollonian harp-player,
Yon wandering psalterist of the sky,
With flickering strings which scatter melody,
The silver-stolèd damsels of the sea."

"Now, Friend, short sweet outsweetening sharpest woes!"

"In the abysmal ocean's luminous levels."

Not lines for stammerers, these, and I question whether the professional reciter would relish them. His poetry roars; it is unvocal; it does not sing itself. Try to read aloud "The Hound of Heaven," "The Anthem of Earth," "Sister Songs," and then pick up Shelley's "Cloud"—it is like listening to Mozart after a revel with Stravinsky. Always at the top note, Thompson's odes read like Walkyric word battles. The atmosphere is sultry, overcharged, giving the impression of labour and heaviness. Take a passage like this:—

"Not to such eyes,
Uneuphrasied with tears, the hierarchical
Vision lies unoccult, rank under rank
Through all create down-wheeling, from the Throne
Even to the bases of the pregnant ooze."

Or this:—

"He threads securely the far intricacies,
With brede from Heaven's wrought vesture
Overstrewn;
Swift Tellus's purfled tunic, girt upon
With the blown chlamys of his fluttering seas;
And the freaked kirtle of the pearlèd moon."

This is word painting certainly, but "Tellus's" is ugly; and again, to compare the sea to a pontifical cope seems to destroy all sense of nature and the rude elements. It has the gargoyle spirit.

Even in his really fine periods he is often ugly:—

"Nigh with abashèd head,
Yourselves linked sisterly, that sister-pair.
And go in presence there;
Saying—'Your young eyes cannot see our forms,
Nor read the yearning of our looks aright;
But Time shall trail the veilings from our hair,
And cleanse your seeing with his euphrasy.'"

That last line, though too sibilant, is imaginative and memorable. Listen to him on the Setting Sun :—

"I see the crimson blazing of thy shawns!
Why do those lucent palms
Strew thy feet's failing thicklier than their might,
Who dost but hood thy glorious eyes with night,
And vex the heels of all the yesterdays?"

Again this is good Thompson, but the third line is turgid and difficult. Here is another fine passage :—

"Thou twi-form deity, nurse at once and sire!
Thou genitor that all things nourishest!
The earth was suckled at thy shining breast,
And in her veins is quick thy milky fire.
Who scarfed her with the morning? And who set
Upon her brow the day-fall's carcanet?
Who queened her front with the enrondured moon?
Who dug night's jewels from their vaulty mine
To dower her past an Eastern wizard's dreams?"

The "enrondured moon"—Shakespearean quite! Only a poet could have written these lines. Indeed, the "Ode to the Setting Sun" is one of the finest things he wrote :—

"Whatso looks lovelily
Is but the rainbow on life's weeping rain."

At times, most certainly, Thompson had superb moments, but as a whole his odes seem to me monumental failures. Splendid as they are, they lack restraint, gradation, song. They are too full-mouthed. The architectonics are Byzantine. It is a pæan of labour, never of joy. He that "no part have in the times' braggèd way, and its loud bruit" sang to "The Sere of the Leaf" :—

"I know not equipoise, only purgatorial joys,
Grief's singing to the soul's instrument,
And forgetfulness which yet knoweth that it doth forget;
But content—what is content?
For a harp of singeing wire, and a goblet dripping fire,
And desires that hunt down Beauty through the Heaven,
With unslackenable bounds, as the deep-mouthed thunder-hounds
Bay at heel the fleeing levin,—
The chaliced lucencies
From pure holy-wells of eyes,
And the bliss unbarked with pain I have given."

The "lutin" of Swedenborgian mysticism, mealy-mouthed, like all mystical effusion! But Thompson could be simple, and what are called his child poems are things of beauty and charm. We all know the line "Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven." It is not a great line, but it touches

a chord, and to the sentimental public, worshipper of Tinker Bell, it is assured of immortality. What matters it that by all logic of the reason of nurseries there must be babies, and if babies, mothers; in short, the old, old sex problem that vexes us here below.

Again, here is a pretty little verse:—

"And the blackbird held his lutany,
All fragrant-through with bliss;
And all things stilled were as a maid
Sweet with a single kiss."

There is the lovely song to Daisy, though he spoilt it by a last verse of irrelevant moralising; that to a Poppy with the lines:—

"She turned, and with the rout of her dusk South hair,
And saw the sleeping gipsy there;
And snatched and snapped it in swift child's whim,
With—'Keep it, long as you live,'—to him."

That is felt, beautiful, the creation of a true poet. There are the lines: "God send a mouth to every kiss; "And Day fulfils the married arms of Night"; "The long Savannahs of the blue"; and these, almost jolly:—

"Our queenly England, in all circumstance,
Of fair and feat adorning to be drest;
Kirtled in jocund green."

That is good, buoyant, happy. We often see England "kirtled in jocund green." But Thompson is the poet of pain, though not of pessimism. On earthly love he is strangely silent. Physical beauty made no appeal to him. In his attitude towards woman he is entirely spiritual; thus he uses the word "virgin" in the Catholic sense of the immaculate conception:—

"Teach love the way to be
A new virginity."

His own physical attitude, in fact, explains much: it is the man and his style. Thompson saw life under the tonsure of chastity. Thus his constant use of the word "Uranian," the spiritual mysticism of his utterings to Nature, his clerical conception of the universe.

The other day, a poet, Richard Middleton, passed from among us unknown, and I cannot refrain from putting this Lullaby of his as a set-off to Thompson's best, say Daisy or the Poppy:—

"Ah, little one, you're tired of play,
Sleep's fingers rest upon your brow;

You've been a woman all the day,
You'd be a baby now;
Oh baby, my baby,
You'd be a baby now.

"Perhaps you had forgotten me,
Because the daisies were so white.
But now you come to mother's knee,
My little babe to-night;
Oh baby, my baby,
My baby every night.

"To-morrow, when the sun's awake,
You'll seek your flowery fields again.
But night shall fall, and for my sake,
You'll be a baby then;
Oh baby, my baby,
My little baby then.

"And you'll grow big, and love will call;
Happen you'll leave me for your man;
And night-times when the shadows fall,
I'll greet as mothers can;
Oh baby, my baby,
As only mothers can.

"And now, my little heart of May,
Lie closely, sleep is on your brow;
You've been a woman all the day,
You'd be my baby now;
Oh baby, my baby's
My little baby now."

Poor Middleton had no sectarian following, but his Lullaby is more quick with human love than Thompson's "Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven," which, after all, is only a pious conceit. And it is precisely here that Thompson chills and disappoints. All great poets are truth-seekers, discoverers, creators. Thompson discovered nothing to us. If Nature was unkind to him, he deliberately set out to accept rather than to discover, to reconcile art to dogma, inspiration to creed, to intellectualise the old rather than to free the new. We may weep with him that laughter was denied him, but the compass he set himself to think within is the exact measure of his limitations. It explains his infractions of artistic taste. His quest—the harmonisation of art with a dogma—proved, as it must be, unrealisable, and thus he is the poet of a Church, of an attitude, of a movement.

"Implacable, sweet dæmon, Poetry."

Yet Thompson is said to have carried about a copy of Blake in his pocket. I would not venture to criticise Thompson's attude to life, which may be described as that

of a Swedenborgian Catholic—religion is a man's private affair—were not his poetry inseparable from that attitude. But as the visionary of a faith, his revelation is merely affirmation; it is a cribbed and cabined thing seeking always to cloak and revitalise the forms of this world with the spiritual symbolism of Belief.

> "There are more things in Heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Thompson could never have written that. His outlook was of the stuff of Loyola, an outlook hostile to creative thought. More, its symbolism became the fount of his whole poetic expression. He saw stoles, Seraphims, vestal candles, the sensuous paraphernalia of ritual in every sepal and carpel, in every lichen, cœlenterate, echinoderm, tangle, or blind hermit-crab crawling about in the ocean caves, in all form and mutation. I miss the calm and the deep wonder of the Pagan spirit, the awe and mystery of Nature. His flights are word-flights. His thoughts do not go to Heaven, they are of the heaven of sacerdotal imagining, of man's doctrinal conception. At times, it is true, he escapes from his own cerement, as in the noble lines which end "An Anthem of Earth":—

> "Death, that doth flush
> The cumbered gutters of humanity."

But just before we have "Pontifical Death." Even in that last splendid passage he cannot shake off the bur of the Church. He speaks of the "steep and trifid God," and again:—

> "Death's ungentle buffet
> Alone makes ceremonial manumission."

These pontifications of speech disturb. They are not literary; in a great poet we demand more than the lip-euphony of ecclesiastical hymnology. They are not so much discords as intrusions. They break the cosmic and intellectual spell. We find our own imagination arrested. We, who would soar with him, are continually being dragged to earth. We who would dwell with him in the spaces of the imagination are always tricked and cheated of our joy, because what Thompson gives us is—affirmation. The affirmation of doctrine.

Words are not enough. In great creative work we seek thought. Thompson gave us only metaphor, symbolism.

spiritualism—a wizardry of phrases to dress up the clichés of a church. He talks, as Byron said, too often in "pimples": of the "aërial hyaline," "conscious gates," etc. It leads him into sickly alliteration, to onomatopoeticism, to sanctimonious hyperbole, such as "The butterfly sunset claps its wings," "so fearfully the sun doth sound," "sweet-pângèd singing," "the sacerdotal sun," "authentic cestus," and always to the stilted Latinity of church terminology. Browning is not perhaps always easy to understand, but it is never the fault of the words. With Thompson it is just the contrary. His thought is conventional, it is the diarrhœtic flux of language which mystifies, which shrieks and hisses by its persistent shock and turgidity, by its linguistic nodes and rugosities.

Thompson uses words mystically, whereas in all Shakespeare there is not a passage that is not perfectly clear and intelligible. He uses thought mystically. And this fault is conspicuously evident in his essay on Shelley—an essay, by the way, which might be taken as an example of poetastic and so bad prose. Take a sentence like this:—

> "Compare with this the genuinely corrupt Byron, through the cracks and fissures of whose heaving versification steam up perpetually the sulphurous vapours from its central iniquity."

Any schoolmaster could point out the blemishes in a sentence like that. As for Byron with his "central iniquity," whatever that may mean, he wrote some of the most glorious letters in this language, and he died, like a poet, for liberty.

It is too early to think of "placing" Thompson, who, yet, with all his faults and limitations, I freely accept as a poet. But already we may say this. He was the child of his age; he has opened to us new possibilities of versification; a few of his poems will undoubtedly live in the literature of this country. In an admirable critical work on Thompson by a Frenchman * the poet is thus guardedly summed up. His place in literature, the author says, will depend up to a point on the "more or less degree of success of the movement of the Catholic renaissance." Both the opinion and the statement of fact are interesting. I entirely agree. As the poet of mysticism, Thompson will always appeal to the nebulous-minded, scarcely to those who seek music in poetry or clear and profound thinking. His

* *Francis Thompson.* Par K. Rooker. (Herbert and Daniel.)

catholicity was not of the mind, but of dogma; he is the carol-boy of Monasticism. That he is a landmark too must be admitted. He is the harbinger of what rather speciously has been styled "New Poetry," the breaking away, that is, from old forms and standards, and there is even the nucleus of a Thompsonian school.

His poetry lacks blood, which is the lubricant of the heart. Its soul is epicene. It has the restlessness of all epicenity. "The Hound of Heaven" is a Hydra, a work perhaps not lacking in genius, but as music ugly, in thought mediæval—as a whole graceless. Those who believe in the Spirit of Man, which is the spirit of the modern scientific world, as it was of Shakespeare, can find little invigoration in the Thompsonian reaffirmation of cloistral cosmogony and but poor comfort in the verbal virtuosity of his inspiration. That he had power, insight, and, at times, an astonishing beauty and felicity of expression, all this we may grant; yet, in sum, as he was not himself of this world, so, neither in sympathy nor in melody, is he with us. He might have been for all that. The most human line in all Thompson, because so utterly unexpected and earthly, is the cry, "God send a mouth to every kiss," for which to all lovers—and who would not be a lover?—he will be for ever memorable. How the poet who associated human love with the Pit came to write that, one fails to understand. It is his solitary tribute to our frail humanity, uttered, as it were, in his own despite. Anthologies will hold to that line for sure. Almost it makes one think that Thompson sacrificed his inspiration to an obsession, that he himself put down the shutter on his own divinity.

A somewhat unctuous adulation of the dead poet prevails to-day, which soon must give way to a truer perspective. Men who write of the cathedral orchestration of Thompson's anthems may be right—I cannot follow criticism with such assentation. The world moves, as we know, *pace* the ecclesiastics, but Thompson was the reed-pipe of neo-medievalism, and not of the sane Burne-Jones-*cum*-Morris school. Personally, I cannot but believe that posterity will omit the simile of the organ. If a cathedral label is needed, he may more accurately be classified as the poet of the gargoyle.

Money

By G. S. Street

THIS article is not about the theory of banking or the ratio of exchanges or the power of wealth in modern politics, or anything of that sort. It is about money, simple money, cash, coin, the stuff.

I am aware that, according to the philosophers, money is not money at all. It is a means to an end. It is comfort, power, and so forth. But it is possible, and not at all unusual, to think of it merely as itself, as a heap of gold or packets of bank-notes, or a balance at the bank, and it is thus that I propose to consider it, at least in the first place, and as closely as I can with my frailty of thought, which will run hither and thither. Other writers who have taken money for their subject have never done this; they have shot away in no time into commerce or sociology, and the glittering heaps and crackling packets have become mere symbols. Yet I am sure most people's thoughts stop short at mere money now and then and for a time. If you have a chance of making a thousand pounds, you think, no doubt, of paying a debt or buying a motor car or doing good with it; but you also, surely, stop short sometimes at thinking of what a splendid and noble thing is a thousand pounds and of how jolly it will be to have it. (Forgive my mentioning so small a sum, reader, if you are a plutocrat. I am not.) And when you do so stop it is a pity that no one should have provided you with a true philosophy of the matter, and I think that no one has. I have but a few fancies in my head, but such as they are it is a pleasure to offer them.

It has always seemed to me to be as superficial as it is obvious to point out that money is merely a means to an end. All sorts of things are means to ends and are ends in themselves as well. A sword is a means of killing a man, but when a smith is making a sword it is an end in itself to him. (That sounds the sort of thing Aristotle told me in my youth: it is hard to be original.) The excel-

lence of the sword is in the fine temper of its blade and so on, and that is an end to the maker. Even so money to the money-maker is an end in itself, and the excellence of money is in its amount: a vulgar excellence, but I come to explain money, not to praise it. Therefore, it is not so completely logical as it seems to exhort the money-maker always to remember that money is a means to an end and to rebuke him for going on after a reasonable end has been attained. In any human pursuit, be it business or profession or sport or game, most of those eminently successful have always thought of the matter in hand and not of a remoter end. The advocate who is thinking of his reputation and prospect of being Lord Chancellor is less likely to win causes than he who is giving all his wits to the points of the suit and is finding his keenest joy in its chances and quibbles for their own sake. The general who wins battles may be inspired by his country's safety or glory, but while he fights his soul is given to outmanœuvring the other general. The golfer who golfs merely for air and exercise—poor abused souls who are made over to golf, you see I find an excuse for you, as for the inveterate money-makers. But by money-makers we mean money-makers, those whose sole object in their business is money, and that is less often the case than is commonly supposed. It is true that in any calling where a man has no money at all, or next to none, his first object is probably to make some. But when the point of decent comfort and freedom from anxiety has been gained, money becomes much of an accident and a by-product. I have never joined, for example, with other unpopular writers in denouncing our popular brothers as mean souls who sacrifice art to pelf, for I believe that they simply do what is most congenial to them and fitted to their aptitudes and that it happens to be profitable. I make no imputation on their souls, and will drink their health if the wine be good, so to say. But when money *is* the sole object, necessarily, in share-dealing and so forth, then, on the other hand, I believe that the remoter ends of increased luxury and "position" and all that are not thought of by the money-maker, though very present to the minds of his family, after the same point of comfort has been gained. He simply goes on making money because it is the game which engrosses him, as it were billiards. And herein is

the explanation of his often-observed meanness. It has often been noticed that rich men who are generous are nearly always men who have inherited their money, not men who have made and are making it. In their case money is not part of their game; they can take a detached view of it and value services it may do other people higher than the possession of it to superfluity. With the others their quantity of money means the points they have scored in their soul-engrossing game, and to ask the pure money-maker to give away a tithe of what he has is to ask the billiard-player who has made a hundred to be content with ninety recorded as his best score. When he buys pictures they are still part of his capital, though I often wonder how he can bring his soul to forgo the interest their worth would have fetched in his market. . . . Think less hardly of the passion of avarice when the avaricious man owes his hoard to his own cunning and skill. He is merely a sort of golfer.

This suggestion towards the psychology of the pure money-maker is not irrelevant, but I must keep closer now to the contemplation of the stuff itself. Beautiful, terrifying sight and thought! I wish I could drop into poetry over it. Mind you, I mean the actual thing. If you like to be reasonable and commonplace, you may say that the significance lies in what the thing can do, the peace of mind it may bring, the comfort, the sight of beautiful cities, ballets, pictures, the succouring of those we want to succour, or in what it saves us from: all very true, but there is such a crowd of these considerations that they all merge together, the mind does not separate them, and what you look at or think of, being a symbol of so much, ceases to be a symbol at all and is itself a strong, living entity, mystic, wonderful. Cash a cheque for ten pounds, if you can, reader, and hold the golden things in your hand and gaze at them. Are you not strangely moved? No? Then you have not been for days without a much-needed half-crown. But for me, at least, there is fear as well in the sight, a vague sense of danger as well as of strength and beauty, and that can hardly be rationally explained—unless one had stolen the money—and clearly shows the mystic nature of the thing. Why not? The use of this precious metal by humanity for so many thousands of years as power has

begotten an intimate correspondence between our minds and it, and bank-notes or a balance at the bank (which are almost, though not quite, as frightening to me) stand immediately for it even to the least active imagination. We inherit certain feelings about it through innumerable generations (or if we don't the learned have given us much more unlikely things to believe), and we cannot analyse them all. But why fear? I protest I do not know, unless extreme unfamiliarity with money gives me such a sense of fear when I have any that some folk have when they visit a foreign country. I do not know if it is common, but I am sure poor X died of it. X was a painter who painted pictures quite satisfactory to himself, but extremely unmarketable. He was always "in difficulties," but what with a little money of his own and a rare sale, managed to be, though never up to time, never fatally behind it. Still, he was always worried about the means of finding the next necessary five-pound note and generally preoccupied with that uncomfortable subject. Well, X was left a legacy, not an enormous sum, but enough to put him straight and make him a few thousands to the good. I met him a week later and he told me he had hardly slept for a week. He said the reaction from his previous worries and the excitement of possessing, for the first time, money he was at liberty to spend as he liked, excited him too much. A week later he was still sleepless and very ill. He was haunted by the idea that his bank would break; he did not really mind if he did lose his money, but the thought of the possibility got on his nerves. He kept on putting it into this or that investment and taking it out again and hoarding it in notes and putting it back into his bank—all was no good. It was too much to spend casually, and he did not want to throw it away like a lunatic. He slept worse and worse, had a bad break-down and is now dead. X's thousands worried him into his grave, and I am sure it was the vague fear and terror of them that killed him.

I suggest with diffidence an explanation of this fear. There is a mystic attraction between money and some natures, and a mystic repulsion between it and others, as we all know. We all know money flies to some people, not by their money-making skill, but apparently by accident, and flies away from others. Rich people are generally

lucky in gambling, poor people always unlucky. This is so universally recognised that if a poor person wins a lottery there are paragraphs in the papers about it—never when a rich person wins, for that is too ordinary. Well, sometimes, very seldom but sometimes, this mysterious correspondence is disturbed by some cause beyond our knowledge and money goes to an alien nature. Immediately it is unhappy and rebellious—one or the other, or both are, I do not know—there is a disturbance in the natural order of the universe. It is as though poison were introduced into a body. If the body is fortunate it throws out the poison; if it does not, it dies. I think, though, it is the money rather than the nature which is distressed; it loathes being with the wrong nature. It inspired, probably, Charles Lamb's friend to say that money kept for three days stank: *his* body rejected the poison. It filled poor X's soul with fear, so that he died. Shall we ever understand how it really works? I wonder if my own vague terror means that a legacy would kill me as it killed X. I wonder . . . but I am a brave man.

Men and Morals

By a Father (Norman Douglas)

It is obvious that the ground must be cleared before one can begin to build. There is spade-work to be done, first of all. One cannot be constructive if an accumulation of rubbish blocks the way. So the authoress of an article in the last number of this Review, dealing with "Women and Morality," seems to have thought; and that, I presume, is the reason why her remarks are not exactly of the "constructive" kind.

Or, to put it in another fashion, she has been taking stock, as they do in business houses: an admirable system, for it helps to elucidate the position of affairs. She has taken stock and in doing so has made a little inventory of certain anachronisms and anomalies that have accumulated on our hands in recent times.

Among other things, she has discovered that mothers in general "are astonishingly and shamefully ignorant." I have read that complaint before, in the pages of certain other woman-writers; and it seems that our progressive people are taking it to heart, since they are founding schools of mother-craft, domestic science, and all the rest of it. That is wise. The maintenance of a family under complex modern conditions has become a veritable science. Why not learn it?

It is easy to point to model mothers—dozens of them. None the less, looking around me as impartially as I can I must say I am surprised at the number of children that survive—so to speak—in spite of their mothers. Ask any doctor who attends the lower classes! The mothers can bring children into the world, but this performance is apt to mark the end of their capacities. And in regard to their social superiors—what thwarted childhood, what ruined healths, ruined careers and ruined marriages! Nobody can misunderstand a child like its own mother. We have been told it over and over again. And nobody, of course,

wields a more formative influence over it at the most critical period of life. Rousseau (a considerable fool) advocated that children should be brought up outside the family circle; the Greeks removed them from the mother's care, at all events; and what our new race-improvers propose doing, when they get their chance, I dare not conjecture. In short, we must civilise our mothers.

Granted: but who is to blame? The male, of course, with that *constructive imagination* of his. This admirable quality which has conjured Hamlet and Prometheus out of the void of Chaos has invented, in the domain of real life, a less pleasing shape—a helpless creature of the female sex displaying certain fond attributes that appealed to man's morbid fancy. The female cat or canary is no less efficient in her department than the male in his; but the men of our species, by admiring the most shallow characteristics of women and discouraging the others, have set a premium on futility: the demand for women-fools has created the supply. Learning and culture were always open to them, but in their social qualities we have not educed what was worth educing. If we had exercised in our relations with women a little more of that critical egotism which we display in our dealings with one another, this state of things would never have arisen.

Nowadays women mean to have no more of it. But it will take more than one short generation to remedy the mischief, during which time a new mother-type will have been evolved. The family will not be disruptured, but it must put on a new face.

The "Decay of Domesticity": the papers are full of it. Home influence, as Grace Aguilar conceived it—where shall we look for it? Wise ladies write to tell us that love is an antediluvian conceit, and that motherhood is not the highest destiny of their sex; wise men shatter our sense of parental responsibility by proving that the proud boast of being the creator of one's progeny is the grossest anthropomorphism—that we are but a negligible link in an endless chain of cause and effect; the eugenics teach—and we are listening furiously—that numbers of us are not fitted to have offspring. Commercial methods have done away with the hundred gracious arts and crafts of the mother—have changed the very nature of the "house-wife." So science,

in one shape or another, is assailing the old family. Somebody, no doubt, will always be good enough to produce children, and the day may dawn when Schopenhauer's proposal of supplying a harem to the right kind of father will be seriously considered; meanwhile I foresee a large increase in the numbers of those who consider matrimony an over-rash speculation. Fastidious bachelors are leaving what they call a pseudo-cultured, wrong-headed and restless parasite to be enjoyed by men of robuster fibre, preferring to spend their money in a shooting trip to Uganda rather than in the Divorce Courts; poor ones plead insufficient means. The girls, disheartened by accounts they receive from married lady friends of the troubles of housekeeping and childbirth, join the army of worldly spinsters—the most insidious enemy of the mother-type. There is a universal complaint that peace is endangered by matrimony. What inducements, they ask, have we for such a venture?

Perhaps rightly, if these figures are approximately correct. Twenty per cent. happily married; forty per cent. acquiescent; and the rest——! The number of preventable domestic catastrophes is quite appalling; divorce, with all its absurdities and incongruities, helps in the dissolution. And sociological causes contribute.

Honour thy father and mother. This Semitic injunction, like the rest of them, should be revised up to date; it was written for quite other conditions. The State educates children, it feeds them, investigates and cures their complaints, washes and weighs them: where does parental care come in? The State provides old folk with refuges and pensions: how about the former obligation of children? Child and parents alike now thank the community for what they once received from each other. And the geographical elements that went to the making of a home are likewise dispersed. The crowning glory of male acquisitiveness—the construction of a permanent abode—where is it? Rich and poor roam about like gypsies from one county to another, from one flat into the next; the local sense of home is gone; the patriarchal board replaced by clubs and grill-rooms. Many a man who thinks to found a home discovers that he has only opened a restaurant for his friends. Lastly, the family has outgrown its ecclesiastical sanction; the oil of

supernaturalism, which once greased the wheels, has run dry; the machinery is creaking.

Whatever points to a loosening or widening, to a divergent development, is *a priori* a welcome sign; for without fluidity we should not have those fresh combinations which are the guarantee of continued existence. Differentiation is the watchword. Now, in regard to this departure of women from their "pre-ordained" function of maternity, are we to believe the writer who says that a revolt from motherhood is a revolt in the direction of free love. If so, it would probably increase prostitution. Certain reformers tell us that this loathesome trade can be ennobled up to a point, and has been so ennobled in the past. Far better, however, to starve it out by procuring a more reasonable proportion of the sexes. Something could be done if women relieved the home pressure by emigration to regions where superabundant males are living in those unhappy conditions which "A Mother" feelingly describes. Something more, if the unnecessary mortality of male infants could be reduced by teaching their mothers the elements of common-sense and hygiene.

Significant, also, is the declaration of a lady sage to the effect that the "exclusive surrender to a single male is alien to womanly nature." It may well be the case; and I think we can certainly go so far as to say that women in such matters are less influenced by abstract considerations of right and wrong than by outward odium and approval. Their social morality does not sit so fast in blood and bone; it is a man-made vesture, covering a creature of sound barbaric instincts—the hope of the future. And her progress towards that new adjustment of sexual relations with man which must inevitably come about would be more rapid but for this very susceptibility to externals—to what is vulgarly thought *respectable*. This is what Weininger meant when he said that "women only respect a woman when she is married." Why this limitation? Because the married state confers the outward appearance of respectability.

I confess I do not understand those who affect panic or despair; who speak as if we had reached a kind of blind alley, as if there was nothing left us to do but a return to Victorian conditions or the demolition of certain "eternal

barriers" in convulsive social upheaval. When I remember how things stood twenty years ago, and then read articles such as this one, whose engaging frankness and sagacity would have been inconceivable in those days of obfuscation—when I glance into all those works, speculative and practical, which have been written during the last decade by discriminating women who have the interests of humanity at heart: then I realise that the more progressive among our sex may at last congratulate themselves upon the possession of a whole-hearted auxiliary. In the earnest collaboration of both sexes lies our hope, as "A Mother" rightly says. Nothing can be expected without the help of woman.

For that old acquisitive sense of the male will ever colour his thoughts: woman will ever remain a "property." Man is a lover of vested interests; a conservative—often a reactionary. His outlook in emotional matters is tainted by a frowsy sentimentalism. He is the incurable visionary and romanticist. Moreover, he is the arch-hypocrite. In our grand national game of *know-nothing-but-do-everything* he is incomparably more skilful than woman, simply because he has had a longer experience of it. This is his penalty for being the bearer of our puritan culture, about which I will say nothing but this—that we never seem to know when we have had enough of a good thing. Like other apostles, he must now die for his creed. In other words: cost what it may, he must see the great national game out. Woman, on the other hand, can graft the latest fruits of modern research upon a primitive stock without incurring the charge of inconsistency. That is why she scorns to stoop to his intellectual cowardice and disloyalty; why her conceptions of morality are less vitiated by introspection and pruriency (daughter of puritanism); why her conduct in love-matters is more healthy, while her writings on this theme are refreshingly objective and sober. Her vision is clearer because she has remained, relatively speaking, in contact with actualities; because her knowledge, such as it is, derives from life and not from the theorisings of mediæval ascetics. Not many of us Englishmen would have ventured to write a veracious and suggestive book like that of Rosa Mayreder.*

* See THE ENGLISH REVIEW, 1913, p. 289.

Yes; the majority of us men have a good deal to learn, and a good deal to unlearn, before we can pretend to approach these questions dispassionately. We must learn, for example, the very elementary truth that human conceptions of right and wrong, were they old as the hills, are being swept away and re-built, day by day, as surely as these are; that our most cherished ideals are liable to be thrust into the scrap-heap at any moment. How many of them have gone there already! Lecky, I fancy, was the last of the moderns to believe in the phantom of intuitive virtues. Is the truth really so hard to grasp, or is it merely distasteful—the truth, I mean, that what is shameful to-day may be meritorious to-morrow? A man who is "virtuous" in exactly the same sense as his great-grandfather would very soon find himself in the clutches of the law for branding a slave or pistolling some friend in a duel. The Spartans considered it positively indecent to neglect an opportunity of stealing. Yet these same Spartans were highly moral, and resented any facetiousness about women *; our attitude would have shocked them, for where would modern conversation and literature be, without its peppery ingredient of seduction, adultery, and divorce?

So the values shift, in perpetual re-adjustment—whether we like it or not. To argue about better or worse may suit the humour of those theologians who were sagely discussing, not long ago, *an foeminae sint monstra*: a man of the world will content himself with observing that what satisfies the moral needs of one generation is pretty sure to be found inadequate for the next. A modern vice, such as mendacity, was accounted a virtue by the greatest nation of antiquity. A modern virtue, like that of forgiving one's enemies, was held up as a vice peculiar to slaves. Drunkenness, reprobated by ancient and moderns, became the mark of a gentleman in intermediate periods. And so forth. Who shall say what fresh conceptions are fermenting in the crucible? One thing we may take for granted: a virtue which stands still, which refuses to conform to our ever-changing environment, is liable, *eo ipso*, to grow into a vice.

* "Il faut rendre cette justice aux anciens qu'ils ne savaient pas plaisanter sur la vertu de la femme, et que, même aux plus mauvais époques, on trouverait difficilement dans les écrivains les plus legers ou les plus licencieux rien qui autorise ou justifie l'adultère."—(J. DENIS.)

If I speak of chastity it must be clearly understood that I do not mean temperance. Between temperance and the other the gulf is exactly as wide as between wisdom and folly. Now: no candid student can doubt the dangerous potentialities of the chastity-ideal; it is fraught with terrific mischiefs, as the history of the race abundantly proves. This toxic theory of the desirability of absolute continence is rooted in the preposterous and degrading doctrine of original sin; it was imported from the East, and, like other importations from that quarter, has done incalculable harm.

I do not see how we can escape the conclusion that chastity is an abnormal condition. It is the negation of the Will-to-Live; an insult to the Creator, and an abomination to man and beast. Yet such is our reverence for this "virtue" that it has been held to include, by implication, all the others—as if lying, meanness, and hypocrisy were incompatible with the virgin state. The converse is nearer the truth. Some of the purest men and women despise chastity from the bottom of their hearts; and they are pure, precisely because they do so despise it. Certain men, perhaps, are permanently continent owing to reduced vitality or what not: if so, it is nothing to boast of. Temperance is the ideal; not chastity.

The fact is, we make so much fuss about our bodily chastity that we have none left for our minds. We are Goths; prone to extremes; narrow but intense; unserene; lacking the golden moderation and "spacious amplitude" of the Latin. We are Anglo-Saxons; pre-eminent for wisdom in practical concerns of government, but distrustful of abstract principles and wider issues in matters of the mind; eager to transport our unique gift of mundane compromise into the regions of pure intelligence—with fatal results. Our morals are good, our principles bad. We live rational lives, in spite of our teachers. But I am not going to say more about the chastity-apotheosis. It says much for our fundamental common sense that, having set up this Oriental nightmare as a moral mark to be aimed at, we straightway treat it in the same fashion as schoolboys treat the effigy known as Aunt Judy—we pelt it with witticism. Until this particular fetich has been dethroned from its bad eminence and saner notions erected, it is sheer waste of time to talk of accommodation between the sexes on

modern lines. We must grow a little more terrestrial for a change, realising that ex-pression, and not re-pression, is the order of the day; that ethics are but a department of physiology, and that the purity which proceeds from knowledge is the best.

From this it follows that I cordially agree with what "A Mother" says as to the effects of levelling-up the male to a female standard. This levelling-up—the phrase is almost as detestable as the thing—is the crux of the question. The difference between the male and female temperament in sexual matters being not one of degree, but of kind, it implies a ferocious misreading of physiology to expect from men the same continence as from women. The proposal, if carried out, would spell racial suicide. Conversely, the "levelling down" of the female to a male standard—the education of girls on masculine lines—has already proved detrimental to some of the finer qualities of the sex. (See the July *Quarterly Review*, p. 152–157). The sexes should be differentiated; the breach between them widened rather than artificially closed up.

This does not apply, of course, to that interesting biological phenomenon, the so-called neuter sex of protean ingredients, where men and women are congenitally assimilated to each other to such an extent that sexual impulses and differences are submerged as regards their outward manifestations. In this ever-increasing section of the populace the sexes may converge as much as they like, for they are not expected to produce physical offspring, though it would be a wise man who could enumerate their spiritual progeny—all they have done towards the amenities of life in the arts and music and letters, while the two type-sexes were engaged in ruder but necessary tasks of fighting, procreating, and reclaiming the waste places of earth. I suspect that the levelling-up system is continually bringing fresh recruits to this neuter contingent. I suspect, further, that a good deal of so-called sex antagonism comes from this quarter; in other words, that the struggle is not so much between men and women, as between the sexless and the sexed.

And—aware as I am that the male of all beasts is curiously patient when compared with his partner—I really think that the limit of male constriction has been

reached in our case. If you doubt this, go and watch those young clerks and others, concerning whom "A Mother" writes that they prowl "like wolves" about our streets in search of the Ewig-weibliche. And that is only half the phenomenon. If you wish to understand its full meaning, you must inspect their female complement—you must shoulder your way in Oxford Street or Kensington through the serried legions of young ladies, listlessly gaping into shop-windows. Small prospect of a matronly vocation for these, despite their evident respectability! They belong to the million superfluous ones—palpable reminders of the fallacy of repressing the male nisus in past days.

To me, such agglomerations of apparently unprofitable femininity convey a somewhat sinister impression. But then—I am on the wrong side of forty. The young city clerk may have another way of looking at things; he may think it monstrously unfair that all these creatures should be sacrificed to the man-created Moloch of virginity. And I, at least, would like to know what they themselves have to say on this point.

I have studied these young fellows, and come to the conclusion that, though simple-minded, they are by no means simpletons. They read, they think, they exchange opinions. They have ideas of history and sociology. They know that a few generations back all pleasure was held to be sinful; they know that modern thinkers have decreed that the repression of pleasure is a pernicious error. They have shrewd notions that the old antagonism of flesh and spirit has been done away with, and that whoever now vindicates the dignity of the human mind vindicates, incidentally, that of the body. They have learnt from bitter experience, if not from books, that conduct which is not based on the organic laws of this same body is vicious; for such conduct is now being forced on them, and accordingly they suffer. This is what most of them say:

"I cannot marry for another ten years: it is out of the question. Meanwhile, how shall I go about my daily task with a quiet spirit, if my strongest needs are systematically unappeased?"

One of them spoke rebelliously of a coming day, such as is foreshadowed in one of our novels, when all the older women will be massacred in order to show the younger ones

that we, the men, can do what we like, after all. Another, pathetically resigned and of a literary bent, quoted the opening sentence of Sterne's "Sentimental Journey."

The prognosis, in all too many cases, is not hopeful. The bolder ones sooner or later take the inevitable step and contract disease and the concomitant bad habits of an irregular life; timid ones console themselves on other lines and not infrequently lose desire for the married state; joining the ranks of confirmed bachelors and cheating our national exchequer of that income-tax which would otherwise have been derived from their children.

Let me add, what everybody surely knows, that these youngsters are not scoundrels or rakes in any sense of the word. They are law-abiding citizens: decent sons of families who support their mothers and sisters by wearisome drudgery, who neither gamble nor drink, who would as soon think of flying as of defrauding their employers, and who, varying as they do in character and attainments, have one feature in common: a righteous dread of contact with that professional prostitute into whose arms our miserable social conventionalities are forcefully thrusting them.

Are such things a credit to civilisation?

Videant feminae! For I cannot help thinking that women, once they have come to accept the scientific truth about these questions, will go a step further than men have dared to go. They will discover that the *bête humaine* is not such a bad fellow as he is painted. They will teach us to regard an institution like matrimony a little more cosmically—as an adaptation or social makeshift; an evil for some, the best that can be contrived for a certain majority at a certain moment. They will maintain that legal difficulties, such as that of providing a reformed status for the offspring of illicit unions, must inevitably evaporate once the social prejudices that gave them birth are removed.

It stands to reason that we cannot expect unanimity. Different women will approach these questions from different points of view according to the outlook of the group to which they belong. There is, for example, the conservative mother-type. Well, she may close her eyes, if so disposed, to what is going on. If she opens them, she will see what I have attempted to portray—the in-

fallible indications of a break-up of that family system of which she is the product. She will note, furthermore, that the most drastic proposals for "reforming the family" have emanated from her own sex.

Then we have a school of earnest new women, married and otherwise, whose aim is the purification of public morals. Some of the best and some of the worst specimens of modern womanhood (the hysterical reformer type) belong to this class. The *liaison* is repugnant to them. They strive for the abolition of prostitution, and in so far have my profound respect. But if, with a view to attaining that end, they insist that the male shall be levelled up to their standard—then I wish them joy of their labours.

Next comes the neuter woman; the sterile worker. She has elective affinities with the neuter man and together they wield incalculable influence: for the good, in some cases. But, unless I am mistaken, this class shows some signs of occupying itself with questions that concern the sexual relations of "normal" people. This is an evil, though I do not see how it can be remedied. Let us have a neuter sex, if we must; but not neuter principles. We want purity—as much of it as we can get. But we do not want neuter-purity.

There is also what might be called the economic female, spinsters for the most part, who are not averse to the married state provided the divorce laws be modified. They desire not only a reformed marriage service, but a reformed conception of the married state. The *liaison* is not utterly repugnant to their ideas. As wives, they are slightly bored at their prospective "duties of propagation"—for the rest, such matters are chiefly interesting to them as economic problems. Wage-earners and capable propagandists, they are the philosophic *élite* of their sex.

Merging imperceptibly into these, there is that enormous class which simply insists upon being "free." It is composed of intelligent and stupid elements agreeing in this, that they have not yet troubled to think clearly about the relations between the sexes or about anything else. They are too intoxicated with freedom, just now, to go into such trifles. All in good time! They are not going to be nuns and anchorites—not unless they like! Nor yet married: on the old lines. A great number of suf-

fragettes belong to this section. They have shaken off their feudal chains and mean to ameliorate their position somehow or other. Let us hope they will also ameliorate that of their numerous masculine admirers. An epoch of female liberty is at hand. So be it. Everything has its compensations. Which of our stern moralists would not like to have been born under Perikles or the Florentine Renaissance? Let him take heart then, since for some obscure reason, these were precisely the periods when women enjoyed uncommon freedom.

One point made by "A Mother" will surely awaken the gratitude of all men—I refer to what she courageously says about the lonely lives of our young pioneers of Empire, shut out from all association with white women. Here is one aspect of the question in practical form which it seems to me women should seriously take into consideration.

Arms and the Man

It is now clear that whenever, and whatever, peace is declared in the Balkans, the Balkan question will now perhaps for the first time emerge as a European problem. With the defeat of the Turks it was naturally enough expected that the Confederate States, mindful of the lessons of history, would sink individual grievances and race-hatred into a common crucible, combining at any rate towards one end: the maintenance and integrity of what was to be the Balkan Federation; and had they done so, unquestionably a new European Power would have arisen —a Slavonic military State shutting out Germany from the Near East, thereby enormously increasing the influence of Russia in Europe, as, *per contra*, enormously prejudicing the power of Germany and her ally, that ethnic congeries of peoples incorporated with Austria. That such a new force would have constituted a danger to European peace cannot be denied. Austria, with her natural *Drang* southwards and towards the sea, would have felt herself hemmed in and frustrated at the Achilles heel of her political structure. Germany would have felt herself "ringed in" in the centre of Europe. Such a Balkan Federation might have been. It would have led to an almost unbearable state of tension in the German-speaking peoples, which, taking the prescient view of statesmanship, it is perhaps as well is not to be the case.

Probably Germany would never have submitted to such a rounding-in of what Fichte long ago described as her "natural boundaries." These, it must always be remembered, extend westward to the mouth of the Rhine, and comprise the Low German-speaking peoples. Nor is it conceivable that Germany would submit to such a forcible and so arbitrary a curtailment of power as would necessarily have resulted from the establishment of a great

military State, shutting her out from the sea towards the south and the south-east. And that such was the case we know from the recrudescence of the German pin-prick policy towards France, which started at the time of the Turkish defeat, and which was met in France with an unexpected expression of military self-confidence and assertion. Germany to-day has no such fear. On the contrary. She has at last seen good to modify her attitude towards us and the justification of our policy—the supremacy of the British Navy; so that for the time being we at any rate may claim to be on quieter terms with the German Empire than we have been at any time since the despatch of the Krüger telegram. So much is to our good certainly, and both directly and indirectly it is to the good of European peace generally.

All this, however, is what might have been. To-day the whole Balkan question is once more in a state of chaos and rudiment. The Bulgars, who a few months ago were hailed as the champions in the war of Christian liberation against the Turks, have by their own policy of greed and stupidity brought upon themselves a nemesis the like of which is without parallel in the history of the rise and fall of peoples. The inner history of the Bulgarian attitude towards her allies is yet to be made known, especially as regards its inspiration. It is difficult, however, to believe that Bulgaria acted towards the Servians and the Greeks in so high-handed a manner without some motive, some hope (shall we say?) of support, which, however, entirely failed to realise itself. In London the Bulgarian delegates, though they displayed much obstinacy and determination, cannot be accused of having displayed ignorance of the vast potentialities involved in the issue of peace. Moreover, they were fully warned of the consequence of failure, and they went away conscious, at any rate, of the enormous responsibility which devolved upon them in all their subsequent actions towards Turkey and their allies. Here, as in other countries, diplomacy failed entirely to realise that far greater than the hatred of Christian towards Turk there lay the inter-racial hatred of Christian towards Christian; that in reality Servia hated the Bulgars and the Bulgars hated the Serbs far more

individually and collectively than either of them hated Mohammedanism or the misrule under which they have suffered for so many centuries. And it was this hatred, we now see, which even on the field of battle kept the Servian and Bulgarian armies so absolutely apart; a severance which in all probability delayed the fall of Adrianople owing to the absence of military co-operation.

About the war with Turkey this may be said: Without the Bulgars the campaign of the allies would have failed. More. Bulgaria, as the neighbour of Roumania, unquestionably bore the chief brunt, for with her troops engaged outside the country she was exposed to a sudden and insidious attack on her flank from the Roumanians, who hate the Bulgarians just as much as the Servians do. To Bulgaria, then, belongs incontestably the chief claim of honour in the joint victory against the Turks. Servia and the Greeks alone, even if they had attempted the task, would in all probability have failed. The army, too, that the Servians met in the field was certainly an inferior one to the army which the Bulgarians had to contend against. There can be no doubt that the defeat of Turkey was due to the initiative of Bulgaria, and to the Bulgarian victories especially.

The Balkan States, at any rate, have learnt the salutary lesson imposed upon Europe by Bismarck: "I give that you give." If the Bulgarians forgot that precept, her allies did not. They had no intention of being outmanœuvred in diplomacy by Bulgaria. And so at the first flash of opposition the allies found themselves fighting about the spoils, ferociously and greedily as a gang of thieves dispute the share and moiety of "swag"; and Bulgaria has been defeated, crushed, stricken down as swiftly as was Turkey, and now stands a wreck at the mercy of the friends for whom and with whom she fought one of the noblest fights in history.

It is not a pleasing sight, and to those idealists who perpetually talk of universal peace and brotherhood and the immorality of maintaining armies or building ships, it is an example which even they cannot overlook. What will

come out of it, it is, of course, too early even to predict. But this is quite certain: however humble Bulgaria may be, the Roumanians are no more friendly disposed to the Servians than the Servians are to the Roumanians, and Bulgaria will issue from the struggle with a sore which only blood retribution will heal. Instead, as we all hoped, of a Christian brother-State united in the interest of peace, we will now have only a new division of Powers, jealous each the one of the other, and so economically and racially disunited and unpeaceful. Instead of a solution to the Balkan problem arising from the defeat and expulsion of the Turks from Europe, we will now have a broken Bulgaria nursing in her heart the rancour of despoliation—another European sore, in short, such as that of Alsace Lorraine in France. What this will mean ultimately it is too early even to conjecture. That, however, it will benefit the Teuton peoples is self-evident. It is what Germany desired and in many ways anticipated. The whole policy of Roumania in this connection, it must be borne in mind, had the sympathy of Germany. Roumania's *coup de Jarnac* was one of the most fateful strokes in modern history. A weak Bulgaria is a German interest. Like Egypt, the sore in the flesh of Anglo-French intimacy, so Bulgaria will be the sore in the flesh of all the allies and of all the Powers whose interests it is to interfere in those parts, and particularly of Russia.

Fortunately we have no direct interest in the business, nor is it for us to venture to dictate the policy to the Powers concerned, nor without grave danger of European conflagration could we even hope to do so. All the talk about the splendid diplomacy of Sir Edward Grey has proved itself to be mere chatter. As a fact, Sir Edward Grey did nothing at all but plead earnestly in the interests of peace—an attitude in times of military deeds which, if dignified and moral, is invariably vain and worthless. Russia, too, has held aloof with singular detachment, and the reason of that is precisely the reason of her neutrality during the outbreak of European Anglophobia during the Boer War, namely, because her outward diplomacy is concentrated upon the Far East, upon the chaos of internal China; and again, because of her own internal chaos within which pre-

vents her from any attempt at military adventure, even on so relatively small a scale as that necessitated by an expeditionary army of some two or three hundred thousand men across the border into the Balkans.

It is this neutrality of Russia which has been the key to the situation, not in the least the attitude of England and Sir Edward Grey. Had Russia been so disposed, the split of the Allies would never have taken place. It was obviously a Russian interest to see a strong Slav Federation established at the heel of Germany, and had she taken a firm attitude when the delegates were discussing conditions of peace in London, the extraordinary war which has led to the annihilation of Bulgaria would never have taken place; but the fact is, Russia herself is not in a condition to indulge in military politics. What was called the Revolution broke out in 1905 as the result of the war; because the army had been sent out of Russia; because as force breeds force, and chaos chaos, so all the revolutionary elements in the country found the necessary medium for their expression. Since then, however, the old autocratic rule has returned to power, with all the old conditions, the old evils, the old oppression, and the old police-mongering bureaucracy of the Alexieff-Pobiedonostzeff *régime*. Nearly all impartial observers cognisant of the conditions reigning in Russia agree that once more the revolutionary tendencies of the country are coming to a head, and that at the least provocation Russia will once more plunge into a state of anarchy and rebellion. This is the explanation of Russia's detachment; and it is the explanation of Roumania's initiative. Action, again, on the part of Russia would have entailed counter action on the part of Austria, when almost inevitably we should have had a struggle involving the whole of Europe. In these circumstances, it is perhaps as well that Russia has not had a strong man at the head of the Government. That, it may be, is an opportunist view; for all kinds of difficulties that might have been solved will remain now indefinitely awaiting solution, and all kinds of questions which might have been settled by a bold and statesmanlike attitude of policy on the part of Russia will now remain problems of diplomatic intrigue, and the great question of the peace of

Europe will now remain a matter of as much precarious chance as it has been since the days of Napoleon.

Once more we may congratulate ourselves on being an Island Power. To the individual Englishman it is indeed of no consequence if Sofia become a Roumanian town or Belgrade a Greek town, as really, now that we have seen the uncharitableness of the little Christian States, whether, in fact, the old Hamidian Government is restored in its entirety to those peoples whose wrongs we have so sentimentally championed with our sympathy. Not even if the little Balkan peoples destroyed their entire virility would it matter very much to this Island; nor is it likely that we shall so easily espouse their causes at future moments of distress. The Balkan peoples, we may say, have solved that part of the problem. We may now put the Gladstonian sympathy in our pockets, and come back to Bismarck with his crude remark about the Pomerian grenadier, and so to the purely materialistic attitude of Hohenzollern statecraft. We come back, that is, once more to our relations between England and Germany. These are essentially connected with the new as with the old Balkan problem.

We saw recently a gratifying relaxation in the Prussian attitude towards us, and the new spirit is certainly a hopeful sign for the future. But let us not be deceived. That spirit was largely prompted by the turn of events in South Central Europe. It was quite obvious that Germany with a powerful Slav hegemony established at her base could not afford to continue an attitude of latent hostility towards us, and so find herself shut in by Russia on the east and the still aggrieved French on the west, and all the time building up to our naval supremacy, thereby incurring more and more the antipathy and suspicion of England. The welcome change produced in Germany was not due to any visit of Lord Haldane or of Lord Morley—of that we may be quite sure. Fate, however, this time has been kind to Germany. The Allies have played into her hands, and instead of rest there must now be unrest in the Balkans, and all this is to the good of Germany, to her Near Eastern policy especially. It will remain to be seen how far and in what way the new political landslide in

those parts will affect, what we may call, her new attitude towards us.

We may take it for granted that Russia will not now interfere in the Balkan question. She is otherwise engaged, preoccupied. That being so, Germany and Austria once more have a comparatively free hand; and what is quite certain is that the Allies, who by crushing Bulgaria think that they have established their own power and hegemony, will discover before long that what they have set up is not a lasting monument of peace, but a maze of intrigue and disharmony. The stronger Austria gets at sea—and she is building now very seriously and methodically on a policy of credit—the greater the necessity to her of ports and coaling stations—in a word, sea-border. The result of this policy may very soon make itself felt. A powerful German and Austrian Navy stationed in the Mediterranean is a factor we cannot afford to ignore. At present, owing to our concentration of naval force in Home waters, we have entirely abandoned the old Mediterranean Sea Policy which, without an Austrian Navy, owing to our alliance with France, we could well afford to do. In this connection we shall be wise not to discount the navy of Italy. One often hears it said that Italy would never fight with Austria, and never fight against England. In theory this may sound a very plausible contention, but who would have thought that the Servians would have attacked the Power that enabled them to turn the Turks out of Europe, or that the Roumanians would not have joined, if only from sentiment, in what was commonly heralded as the grand Christian campaign against Mohammedanism; or, again, that Turk and Greek would ever simultaneously be seen marching in martial solidarity upon Sofia? Yet Europe has witnessed all these things within a few months. We have been told, too, of the power of money; that war was becoming rapidly impossible owing to the enormous financial strain laid upon the contesting peoples and its inevitable breakdown of the whole economic life. The Balkans have exploded this illusion too. Started by the pigmy power of Montenegro, the war has gone on blithely, as were money of no account at all; as though it were the easiest thing in the world to maintain the entire male popula-

tion of five peoples, by common consent reckoned the poorest peoples in Europe, on a war footing, with all its terrific expenditure of life and material. It is a little lesson both in economics and political ethics.

Turning to Italy, we may all agree that she is extremely unlikely to associate herself in any military enterprise directed against this country. Sympathy, sentiment, advantage, all seem to point in this direction, but—and this is the real question—she is the third party in the Triple Alliance. Her ships, therefore, are by all law of military and political right hypothecated in the service of the major arm composing the Alliance, as unquestionably the call would come upon her in the event of any trouble between England and Germany. We know now that the Servians and the Bulgarians hate one another as, perhaps, only Christians can; yet they fought shoulder to shoulder against the Turk, acclaimed from every European pulpit, and only showed their true spirit and design when the goal of their co-partnership had been achieved. Italy, we must always remember, may find herself in a similar case. However much the Italians may harbour resentful thoughts against the Austrians, they may yet find themselves compelled by State consideration to join their forces with those of the very people they most wish themselves to destroy, as the Servians and the Bulgarians recently have done. It will be a grave mistake in diplomatic prescience to regard Italy as invariably and inevitably a neutral force, so far as this country is concerned. So long as Italy belongs to the Triple Alliance, precisely so long have we to reckon with Italian naval and military force in any serious trouble with Germany or Austria, and we shall be wise to consider this fact in its bearing on our own shipbuilding programme.

In a few years the joint Austrian and Italian Navy will be able to present a very formidable front in Mediterranean waters. Indeed, Mr. Churchill only recently admitted the importance of that sea, from a military point of view, to the British Empire. It cannot be said that we are taking the steps dictated by that proclamation. The three Canadian ships have fallen through. The margin of safety,

now declared at 60 per cent. and now at 50 per cent., has again been allowed to dwindle to what no man, neither expert nor layman, can define as any standard at all. It is now quite impossible to understand whether the Admiralty has a standard in relation to those aimed at by other Powers, and this confusion exists at a time when oil is rapidly superseding coal as the driving force of naval energy; when, in a word, the most stupendous change is taking place in the naval arm that has occurred since the displacement of wooden keels for armour plate. One misses the calm and systematic doggedness of the German shipbuilding direction, one misses the prescience of statesmanlike provision; we seem to be waiting for events rather than anticipating. The tendency to discount Italy and disregard the strength of Austria is evident in the official attitude towards this matter; and, of course, it may be right. That, however, is only a supposition. The business of statesmanship is not the present, but the morrow; is not expectation, but anticipation; is not assumption, but presumption. Actual political determinants are, of course, not to be left out of account, and we may grant that, as at present constituted, England, perhaps, is as little confronted by aggressive hostility at this moment as at any time since the crisis of Fashoda. Nor is it our purpose to insist on any outcry of alarm, but certain things are plain. One is that our Admiralty is running on an economic policy with its spy-glass cocked more at the present political conditions than at future eventualities. The other is that the Triple Alliance is pursuing a steady shipbuilding policy of progression, unaffected by all sentiment and by all the armchair theoretics of present-time humanitarianism.

Now if the Balkan War has proved anything, it is how little in policy as in war the expected may be depended upon. When Turkey was first attacked, military opinion assured us that the little Powers would be whipped back into their places. When the exact contrary result had been achieved, Europe broke out in pæans of praise of the noble Balkan States, and, above all, of the military prowess exhibited by Bulgaria. The impregnable fortifications of Turkey, plus von der Goltz, turned out to be myths, as Turkey's strategy turned out to be a myth and the quality

of the Turkish soldier turned out to be as inferior as was his German gun to that of the Creusot. Of the subsequent diplomatic surprises mention has already been made; we need not dwell upon them; but they, at any rate, show how formidable and how fickle alliances can be, what little part idealism plays in the issue of warfare or religious homogeneity; how utterly incalculable are the fates of peoples, as of individuals; how pitiless war, which is the final arbitrament, can be to the conquered and conqueror alike.

To disregard the Mediterranean question, therefore, would seem an act of folly. In reality it has been revived. The new combinations that may arise out of the new Balkan War are beyond all calculation, as all the old calculations we counted upon are upset. Of what a few months ago seemed certain, nothing remains. On the contrary, the re-affirmation of Roumania is the re-affirmation of German interest. The re-affirmation of Turkey is again the re-affirmation of German policy. The declension of Bulgaria, as the central unit in the Balkan constellation, will be a permanent source of weakness and anxiety, intrigue and blood rancour. So far as it is possible to say at present, little material advantage has been gained in the interests of European harmony, and very little in the interests of the litigious peoples engaged. The Albanian question remains. It is difficult to see what advantage Greece is likely to obtain from Macedonian aggrandisement; the Power question remains, which may at any moment (and will probably) be shifted and solved by a Bulgarian alliance with, perhaps, Austria or Roumania, or even Turkey, for purposes of vengeance and reprisals. As a fact, out of the whole entanglement Germany is now certain not to fall short. Instead of Russia obtaining the material advantage, it will rather accrue to Germany, and this is the new condition which it behoves us to consider.

It is more than likely that as a result of the internal chaos in China, Russia will be engaged in something very like active pacification in that country. Her European interest will thus for some years to come probably be in abeyance. This is again a fact which militates to the ad-

vantage of Germany. To us, again, the lesson is ships. More and more our national safety is now becoming a question of naval force, *i.e.*, the preservation of our own Island integrity. Delighted as we all are with the expressions of friendship Germany has recently bestowed upon us, we must never forget that the three navies of Germany, Austria and Italy are increasing at a rate entirely disproportionate both in quality and in quantity to that of our own. It is not a question of friendship or sympathy, or even of alliance. The issue, should it ever be a fighting issue, will depend on power only. What we have to consider is not so much the feelings of the Triple Alliance towards us, but the naval strength that together they may be able now and at any future time to bring to bear upon us. Any other attitude towards the matter is one merely of sentiment or of ignorance. At this moment the whole balance of English strength in the Mediterranean is maintained by virtue of the Anglo-French Entente, and not by our own force in those waters. Strategically, it may be admitted that the question of corking up the Mediterranean, as opposed to our maintaining a powerful force there, is open to serious discussion. So far, however, as Egypt or the way to the East is concerned, it is difficult to admit that this is so. Such would appear, too, to be the opinion of our Naval Lords. For the time being we have practically surrendered the Mediterranean, and at the same time we are setting an example in shipbuilding modification which is not being followed by the three countries who may prospectively—and the conjecture is purely one of Kriegspiel—some day or other be aligned against us. We are talking at this moment a great deal about military service and the necessity of a militia army to defend these shores. The question is: Are we not falling into the danger of over-reaching our resources? To neglect the Navy for the Army would be sheer madness. To build up a great army for purposes of exterritorial invasion at the expense of the Navy would be to court inevitable and irreparable disaster, and if we are wise we shall learn from all that has happened in the Balkans the great lesson of prudence.

From lack of prudence Turkey neglected to fortify herself in Europe. From lack of prudence Bulgaria neglected

to estimate the strength of her Allies, carried away by the exuberance of her own triumph. From lack of prudence in her domestic affairs, Russia finds herself to-day unable to assert her interests outside the confines of her own country. From lack of prudence the little Powers ultimately will find themselves worsted in the great struggle they have won. Once more we have seen that war still is the last reason of diplomacy; that it breaks out when least expected; that its consequences are generally unforeseen. Taking the strength in ships of the Triple Alliance, however friendly disposed we may feel towards the whole or its parts, we notice an ever-decreasing margin of security. Whatever else the nemesis of Bulgaria has taught the world, it points to the value of power as the only way to maintain and secure the position that a nation holds.

The Income Tax as a Penaliser of Marriage

By Marie C. Stopes, D.Sc., Ph.D.

WITHOUT doubt one must absolve our legislators from any deliberate intention to penalise marriage and to encourage vice. Nevertheless, that is the simple and inevitable result of the present statutes and rules which guide our income-tax officials in their business. I distinguish between statutes and rules deliberately, for many of the courses followed by the income-tax inquisitor are illegal; but of that anon.

Even those who most abhor the income tax often do not realise the whole of its deadly effect, and may ask incredulously: But how does it penalise marriage? The answer is simple: It makes a man and a woman pay a tax on their incomes when they are married, which incomes are quite free from taxation before marriage, and which would also be free from taxation if they lived together without having been through the ceremony of marriage.

And, nevertheless, our rulers, our sociologists and our philosophers raise an outcry against the declining birth-rate in the professional and middle-class grades of society, the very section of the community which should be its backbone of moral and intellectual strength.

This absurd, this well-nigh Gilbertian situation—the leaders wailing over the disinclination of a section of the community to marry, and at the same time actually and heavily taxing those who do marry, and leaving free of this tax those who do not marry or who live together in sin—seems incredible.

Yet this very thing is solemnly and inanely being done in our midst to-day. An illustration will bring the facts home. Mary Smith is a bright girl of sound physique and good education who, having £150 a year in shares left her by her father, is free to keep out of the fight in the wage-

earning mart, but is too public-spirited to do nothing, and so she lives simply and happily spending a share of her income on social work of one kind or another—schools for mothers, boys' brigades, and what not. Each year her dividends are paid her, with one shilling and twopence in the pound (illegally—see Mr. Bowles' recent result against the Bank of England) deducted from them; but as her income is under the £160 limit, and she is unmarried, she does not have much difficulty in getting her money refunded, and she has her whole £150 to reckon on each year. After a while Mary meets John Brown. Now John Brown is fortunate also in having £150 a year from shares his uncle left him, and he also gets back the rebate, and devotes the whole £150 to keeping himself and fostering the vein of poetry which he feels is destined to make him famous. But Mary is more warm and sweet than distant and elusive fame, and so he marries her. At the end of the first year the income-tax papers come in, and now, "a wife's income being reckoned as her husband's," John Brown is assessed for an income of £300, and our young couple find they have to pay on £140 of their income. A direct tax on marriage! But never in their lives have they needed the few extra pounds as they do now, for a little one is coming, and they are about to give the State some of its greatest wealth—a child well born. Well born in a eugenic, not a silly social sense.

Is not that enough to show the folly—nay, the direct criminality of "deeming a wife's income as her husband's for purposes of taxation"?

But let us follow Mary and John a little further. In five years John's "artistic temperament" has revolted against the self-sacrifice entailed in meeting the demands of two little ones and a wife on an amount of money that was not too much for him and his wife alone. He has wearied of it all, and weakened; he has reviled, abused her, and then finally left her, while he goes to live with Polly, the merry actress. In order to enjoy the delights of Polly's society, John makes inroads into his capital, finally selling it all out and keeping the proceeds at the bank so as to be available in its handiest form as ready cash. John Brown has now no income properly his own, but "for purposes of taxation" Mary's income is reckoned

as his, and so he is assessed for £150 a year. The income tax on this being deducted at the source, the amount has to be reclaimed, and, according to our present code, is only claimable by the husband. So Mary, who is now left alone to keep the two children as best she can, has £8 15*s.* taken from her income every year and given by the State to her husband, to help him to amuse Polly. As he has now run through his own money, he can claim complete exemption from taxation, and *he* is refunded the amount that Mary loses. Only by legally separating herself from him can Mary hope to get the sorely-needed money repaid to herself. If she shrinks from this course—as most of the best women do—the State will continue, till she or her husband dies, to take nearly nine pounds from her every year and pay it over to her worthless husband.

The comic opera case of the Government *versus* Mr. Mark Wilks must be known to everyone. By imprisoning this heroic man, the Government let in a vivid ray of light on the illogic and the unfairness of their own "legal" proceedings, which included distraining upon the goods of the wife, though the law expressly states that no married woman is liable to taxation. One would think that in a body of sane and reasonable men the discovery of a state of affairs which was characterised as "absurd" by Earl Russell in the House of Lords (see Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 12, No. 54, p. 826); which is so clearly an influence encouraging to immorality; and which penalises the best section of the community, and that section in which the low birth-rate makes publicists weep crocodile tears, one would surely think that the mere statement of so unjust and ridiculous a code would ensure its revision. Little, then, do we know our politicians. In the House of Lords (Debates, Vol. 12, p. 831) Lord Ashby St. Ledgers realised the deplorable truth when he said, "Why not treat the husband's and wife's incomes as entirely separate? That is a suggestion which appears to have some advantages, but it would be attended with much loss to the Exchequer, and on that ground alone I think it is not likely to be contemplated."

But one must ask: Does injustice and cruelty ever go unpunished? Remote as the punishment may appear, so that the culprit is deluded into believing that he has

escaped the vengeance of heaven, it is never remitted. The result of treating a married woman's income as her husband's for purposes of taxation in defiance of the Property Act, which expressly states that it is the woman's own possession, has not only been to make the Treasury the laughing stock of Europe and America—which were a small matter—but has the effect, dangerous for the whole community, of penalising and discouraging the marriage of the class we as a nation most require. It has, moreover, still another result, one of which the Treasury are probably totally unaware, but which is serious for them, for it touches their pockets. This result is the cause of "much loss to the Exchequer," because men and women, goaded by the blind injustice of our Treasury, are investing abroad in such a manner as to avoid entirely *all* income-tax payments. It would probably astonish the Treasury Bench if they could be present at meetings of women's suffrage societies and hear the women in numbers passing on to each other the exact information how this is to be done. The Treasury is outwitted of far more than they would lose by making a decent fair law which recognised the property of a married woman as belonging to her, and which assessed her and her husband as separate individuals in as fair a manner as if they were unmarried. Then, too, the number of women who defy the law and who refuse to make returns at all, and are a total loss to the Exchequer, is an already important and an increasing retribution for the injustice done to wives. Until married women are treated by the income-tax officials as distinct individuals, and a man or a woman with a small income is allowed entire rebate, as much after his or her marriage, even to a rich spouse, as before it, the Exchequer will lose an increasing amount from all kinds of women who are loyal to each other, and from men who do not choose to be taxed for the privilege of being husbands. If the Exchequer must tax a special section of the community, let it be the bachelors and the wealthy spinsters, or those who live in sinful unions, and not those who are fine enough to take upon them the burdens and responsibilities of marriage.

The Theatrical Season

THE magnificent success of Sir Joseph Beecham's Russian productions has been the outstanding feature of the season, and it is gratifying to find in the alliance of business with art so entirely notable an achievement. In Russian opera we in England have seen a new thing, or rather the right thing, a live operatic art—the harmonisation, that is, of all the machinery and instruments of production in one applied whole. "Boris Goŭdounov" was nothing less than a revelation. Instead of the usual wooden *décor*, lifelessness and artificiality of the modern commercialised "star" opera, we saw the most careful stage-management, the most picturesque detail of costume and mass arrangement, the most artistic direction of dramatic optics and inscenation, and, what was most astonishing of all, superb individual and all-round acting.

No unlovely, undirected crowds—but acting of the most intelligent and consummate kind. Instead of a mere plot held together by, and dependent upon, the presentation of song and orchestration, we saw a logical and moving tragedy, as dramatic as a play of Shakespeare. Instead of a "star" tenor, pampered like an orchid, with some half-dozen stock gesticulations and heroic postures, giving splendiferously of his top notes and fioriotura, we found a great actor, Chaliapin: a figure of austere and superb dramatic presence, who acted as well as Moskowitch can, better, most certainly, than any tragedian we have had on our stage for a decade or more. The thing was so surprising that the flower of London society was "turned on," as it were. One could not get seats. All the tiaras of Covent Garden seemed to be at Drury Lane. Here was an operatic singer called before the curtain time after time, not so much for his voice, but for his acting, as if he were Nijinsky or Karsávina who is now at the pinnacle of grace in her expression of "elevation" and saltatura. We had the new sensation of being thrilled at opera; of taking an intelligent

interest in the play; actually of calling before the curtain the crowd to applaud them for their acting; finally of witnessing a piece of dramatic play as good as Sarah or the Duse, Novelli or old Got, at their best.

Nor is there any heroine in "Boris"; nor any love scene of potion or sentiment; nor are there any heroics, nor any musical fantastics, nor is there even an interpolated ballet to while away the time. The music is mellow, deliciously calm and sensuous, redolent with the melody of Russian dance rhythm, but absolutely unsensational, a composition free from all eccentricity of taste or contrivance. A beautiful all-round production—and the same must be said of Ivan and Khovántchina—opera as it might, as it should be; and for this the public is indebted to the generosity of the Beecham management.

In another respect, too, there has been a surprise—melodrama has returned, due without a doubt to the influence of the cinema, which, with its inevitable absence of the human soul of illusion, has revived the interest in the artificial play of position and condition. *Jim the Penman* has come back. Sardou has come back; *Diplomacy* has been as popular as was even *The Harbour Lights*, in the days when that fine and robustious actor, William Terris, took off his sailor's cap fifty times a night to the name of woman and a man's honour. Otherwise, there has not been very much. Arnold Bennett has not only told us how relatively easy it is to write a play; he has proved it, with and without Mr. Knoblauch. After some trouble, both *Typhoon* and *The Yellow Jacket* have lasted the season, both of them interesting and very picturesque productions; a new theatre, the Ambassadors, has opened, a dear little place, somewhat like the *Théâtre Féminin* in Paris; and the Stage Society has again justified its existence by the presentation of a charming light comedy—real, natural comedy—by George Moore, which, it is to be hoped, will be given a chance in box office conditions in the autumn.

There has been an American invasion, this time a victory, based on rag-time, negroes, mannequin frocks, beauty girls with American figures and the "don't waste a moment of the time" methods of the American impressario, whose policy may be epitomised as "anything and everything, but always something." Then dancing has

come back; M. Meurice has filled Princes over muffins and crumpets; dancing masters have found a small fortune in Tango Teas and aspiring Turkey Trotters, and even the "17th" have learnt to one-step. The musical play, with the title of a girl in or on something or other, has been as popular as ever; in a word, we have been jolly and Terpsichorean rather than theatrical this season, the "superior people" once more taking a back seat.

We salute a well-deserved knighthood bestowed on Forbes-Robertson.

Sir Herbert Tree has written a delightful book; Miss Wish Wynne, a new talent, has been discovered, but otherwise individualistic talent seems mostly on the Halls, and there is still a posse of chorus ladies not yet entered in *Whitaker*.

Not much to boast about, perhaps, in a city of six million people, but then the time for art in our modern capitalistic civilisation is exiguous. We must content ourselves with the triumph of the Russians. Chaliapin, Nijinsky, Pávlova, Karsávina, the operatic crowd, the *corps-du-ballet*—these are the people who have mattered—the rest has been mostly entertainment. Not great art, that is, whereas what the Slavs give us is inspiration. But inspiration is hope; there is still hope then.

No new "young man" has come forward; genius, no doubt, has been dancing. And the censor? Ah, the Russian Ballet has hoisted him, abetted by the gowns that the women wore who went to see it: in a word, he has been circumvented by the sheer beauty of our own and of the Russians' transparencies. Are we downhearted? Not one whit, though there have been signs of asexuality and so decadence in the latest development of the Nijinsky Ballet. Potiphar's wife is coming soon—the censor, after all, is a man of the world. A wise man in his own opportunities. Grace upon him. That is about all. I missed seeing the "blue-nosed" baboon, but I have been told that he was a very good turn, too. I can well believe it. We have got beyond Darwinian evolution to-day. Are we not in the throes of slash-skirt revolution?

S. O.

Books of the Month

ECONOMIC

CROWDS: A STUDY OF THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY AND OF THE FEARS, DESIRES, AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PEOPLE. By GERALD STANLEY LEE. Methuen. 6*s*.

Mr. Lee reminds us of Mr. Robert Blatchford. He is not so direct. He is not so well informed. He deals in theories where Mr. Blatchford dealt either with facts or what might very well pass for facts. He is not a socialist, nor is he quite so definite as Mr. Blatchford concerning the precise specific which he is recommending for the cure of the world. But he has the same self-confidence, the same bold windiness of rhetoric, the same habit of button-holing the universe and taking it into his confidence. He bids us remember that in these days we live in crowds and have crowd-thoughts; that this crowd, "now and here," has to face itself with the question "as if it were some great scare-head or bill-board on the world," "Where are we going?"; that it behoves it to consider, not the "not-things" of Mr. Shaw, but the things that "all men in the world want." He himself wants "crowd-men," or "inspired millionaires," and eager, optimistic crowds pressing enthusiastically towards a hero of the Wilbur-Wright indifference to fame, saying "yes" to the Universe, demanding a President who will "give at last the face of the United States an expression." Mr. Lee has based himself mainly upon Carlyle and Walt Whitman, but he has introduced into the mixture a strong infusion of Nietzsche, Mr. Chesterton, and the American mob-orator. An exceptionally entertaining book.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

JANE AUSTEN, HER LIFE AND LETTERS: A FAMILY RECORD. By WILLIAM AUSTEN-LEIGH and RICHARD A. AUSTEN-LEIGH. Smith, Elder. 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

However little Jane Austen had to write about, she was a very good letter-writer; and, as is to be expected, the letters, taken from Lord Brabourne's edition, are far the most interesting part of this book. The essentials of Jane Austen's life must still be taken from the admirable memoir written by the late J. E. Austen-Leigh, and the present authors have not hesitated to embody long passages from this work. What their own research has added is not, for the most part, of direct importance for the life of the novelist. They have unearthed many facts about Jane's cousins and more distant relations; but these facts add little to the picture that we can form of the maiden lady who poured forth her pungent criticisms of the life around her into the confidential bosom of her sister Cassandra.

Much more than this we shall never know. The society in which she moved in the neighbourhood of Steventon Rectory and at Bath was a society of "good families"; but it had little to do with the greater world which reports itself and can be made to live again in history. Jane Austen tells far more about her social circle than her social circle could ever tell about her. When, some time after her father's death, she lived with her mother and sister at Chawton, she was even more secluded from society

than before, in spite of the fact that she was making a reputation. She "lived in entire seclusion from the literary world," said the author of the *Memoir*, and probably "never was in company with any person whose talents or celebrity equalled her own." This ordinariness of her life doubtless added much to the charm of her work. She was self-critical, but never sophisticated. In her earliest letters to Cassandra she ridicules the people about her, but she was not self-conscious. She was aware of her talents, but she never laid claim to more wisdom than she possessed. "I think I may boast myself to be," she wrote in 1815, "with all possible vanity, the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress." Writing of Jane when she was considerably younger, Miss Mitford, who was not in a very good position to judge, declares that she was "the prettiest, silliest, most affected, husband-hunting butterfly she ever remembers." The statement seems to be as far from the truth as the pronouncement by a favourite niece: "I do not suppose she ever in her life said a sharp thing." It is amusing to find the present authors endorsing the latter verdict, in view of the unsparing satirical remarks which occur on almost every page of the very letters here published. But their book is a very useful one, bringing together as it does all that is known on the subject, and based upon very careful research.

SCIENCE AND THE INFINITE. By SIDNEY T. KLEIN. Wm. Rider. 2*s*. 6*d*.

This book is of an importance which I think it would be hard to overrate. The two main religious tendencies of to-day are towards Science and Mysticism. Mr. Klein unites the two.

He is himself a man of science, but he does not base his argument for mystic interpretation of the Universe upon spooks and Eusapia Palladino. "Psychic phenomena" are never mentioned. One is glad to be confirmed in one's original view—maintained with difficulty for many years—that such events, if they occur, prove no more than do the commonest facts of nature.

Mr. Klein attacks the shallow "normal" conception on purely scientific lines. He shows the narrowness of the limits within which our senses work. We can only see six times a second—a gas-jet lit and extinguished more frequently appears a continuous flame. Yet we can see for $\frac{1}{1,000,000}$ of a second, so that a bullet in flight, illuminated for that period only, can be seen as a stationary object, with every marking on it clear. An insect has a totally different range. Its wings flap 400 times a second; and, if it be conscious of each of its movements, its life of a day may be equivalent (in experience) to man's seventy years. A fly cannot perceive motion in an object moving more slowly than two inches a second, so that you can put your finger on it—so long as you remember not to hurry!

Carry these differences further. Magnify and diminish sufficiently, and a grain of dust becomes indistinguishable from the Milky Way. Each is a system of bodies whirling with incalculable swiftness in an abyss of space relatively enormous.

In these and many other ways Mr. Klein undermines our naïve belief in Time and Space, and shows that to perfect knowledge there is only Here and Now. The Universe is a single instantaneous phenomenon. This conclusion is identical with that reached by the Mystic in the first of the really high trances, and with the doctrine taught in the more advanced schools of Shavism.

We may disagree with certain assumptions, notably with this, that at death the soul attains full comprehension of these truths. Not one man in a thousand has a soul at all in this sense. It is the constant error of every philosopher to assume that his mind is typical.

But we cannot too highly praise the manner whereby the ordinary educated mind is led to a perception of the Truth through simple and incontrovertible intellectual methods. And the demonstrations of W. Bro. Klein P.M. as to the right-angled triangle, and of M.E. Comp. Klein P.Z. as to the equilateral triangle, and of Most Wise Sovereign Klein XVIII°

as to the Vesica Piscis, which sum in a brilliant dozen pages the whole secret of Mediæval Architecture, are as admirable as those illustrations from entomology which challenge even M. Henri Fabre.

I am sorry to be unable to review this book at greater length; it is worthy of a special article.

SOCIALISM AND SYNDICALISM. By PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P.	
SANE TRADE UNIONISM. By W. V. OSBORNE.	
INDUSTRIAL GERMANY. By W. H. DAWSON.	Collins.
MODERN VIEWS ON EDUCATION. By THISELTON MARK.	1s. each.
SMALL HOLDINGS. By JAMES LONG.	
EUGENICS. By EDGAR SCHUSTER.	

These are the first volumes of the "Nation's Library," a new series of shilling books on current topics. The most brilliant of the six is Dr. Thiselton Mark's survey of education, which, for its breadth of outlook, for its keen insight into the difficulties that beset the path of the educationist, and for the manner in which it brushes aside inessentials and goes straight for fundamental principles, deserves the widest possible circulation and attention. For primary and secondary schools the author demands a curriculum—and quotes Mr. A. C. Benson's article which appeared in the ENGLISH REVIEW last October in support—which will interest each student in the actual vital acts of life as it is being lived around him. As for the elementary schools, more teachers and smaller classes are absolutely necessary if anything like value is to be had for the money now being spent on popular education. Individuality, the power for useful work, and character befitting real citizens are needed, but how can such qualities be expected when, according to the report of the Committee on Industrial Education, the children from our elementary schools are not able to think for themselves. They have had eight years of schooling, from infancy onwards, and they have not even learned to use their own brains. A new Education Bill is surely needed.

In one breathless sentence Mr. Snowden sums up his case in the first chapter of his book. He says: "In this world-movement for social betterment there stands forth one section which has been given a clearer vision of the task before humanity, and that is the men and women, a great and growing army in all lands, who have realised that Socialism, based upon the impregnable rock of history, economics, and morality can alone explain the causes of existing industrial and social evils, and alone submits a coherent, intelligent, scientific, and practical scheme of change." Blue-books, history books, statistical records, and authorities of all kinds are quoted to prove that capitalism has failed, and must be superseded by a state of collective ownership of industries. Socialism is the ideal, but only by political methods can it be realised. The strike policy of recent years is vigorously condemned. Indeed, Mr. Snowden seems to have been so anxious to discredit Syndicalism, and to emphasise the truth of the German Social Democrat's remark that "the general strike is general nonsense," that he has failed to justify his title. Although we agree with him that the Syndicalists are on the wrong track, we do not think he has stated their case and the objections to it so clearly as he might have done.

Sane Trade Unionism we consider a superfluous work. As a statement of the author's reason for objecting to trade union funds being used for financing a political party, part of it is interesting, but that part could easily have been stated in the space devoted to one chapter.

Dr. Schuster supplies a good many facts and some useful information in support of the Eugenists' contention that the nation should pay more attention to the replenishing of its human stock from sane and healthy

parents. The volumes of Professor James Long and Mr. W. H. Dawson can also be heartily recommended to the inquirer into their special subjects. The "Nation's Library" deserves to succeed.

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. Volume IX. Cambridge University Press. 9s. net.

The period covered by this volume does not include many names of forthright importance. One does not turn at once to a paradoxical article by Saintsbury on Milton, for instance. Steele, Addison, Swift, Pope, are its outstanding names; and in each case we turn to them less for themselves than for what may be said of their background. With the possible exception of Pope, the interest of their work is as against that background, not as something that comes down to us shining in its own separate glory. They are "spectators" and "tatlers," not creators.

Professor W. P. Trent opens the volume by conducting us through this hurly-burly, under the heading, "Defoe—The Newspaper and the Novel." Reading his chapter together with Mr. J. B. Williams's on "The Beginnings of English Journalism" in Vol. VII., the sequence and order are lost, not only because the present article covers something of the earlier ground, but chiefly because they both surrender the general shape of the movement to its less important details. Yet with regard to Defoe himself, Professor Trent's research makes his article invaluable as a delving ground; and it sticks closely to Defoe as an author and a journalist, letting the biography arise as it may out of that.

The newspaper and the coffee-house: these were the two influences of the time. And just as Defoe was the typical representative of the one, Steele and Addison, in the prose essay, and Pope, in the verse essay, were the more literary representatives of the influence of the latter. They both meant the triumph of mediocrity; mediocrity brought to a fine pitch. Dick Steele was but a piebald bird in that company; and Mr. Harold Routh, in the admirable chapter dealing with him and his severer colleague, very finely depicts the change that the predominance meant—the passing of colour, the suspicion of genius, and the coming of formalism in life and letters. It was an excellent stroke of editing that placed these two chapters at the outset of the volume. Taken together with Mr. Bensly's chapter on Pope, that succeeds, and undertakes a warm espousal of Pope as a poet at the very opening of the book the clue to its whole contents is well given.

It is strange that Mr. Bensly, thoughout his chapter, should make no reference to Pope's indebtedness to Milton. In fact, one of the deficiencies of this collaborative method of writing history is that we lose sight of the wider influences in the particular affairs. The shadow of that titanic figure is over the whole time; as a tractarian in the journalists, as a craftsman on the poets, and as a handler of invective on Swift. Mr. George Atherton Aitken's chapter on Swift is just what is needed in its place.

That is the compass of the volume. It takes us from Steele and Addison to Pope and Swift. But within that compass a great deal lies, and this is handled in orderly detachments. Messrs. Seccombe and Saintsbury undertake the "Lesser Verse Writers"; the Master of Peterhouse has two chapters on the "Historical and Political Writers"; Mr. Whibley deals with burlesque and translation; Professor Sorley with Berkeley, the Deists, and Moralists; Dr. Caroline Spurgeon with "William Law and the Mystics"; Messrs. James Duff Duff and H. G. Aldis with "Scholars and Antiquaries"; and so forth. One of the best chapters in the book is also the least expected. One does not think of mystics during that period. As Dr. Spurgeon says: "In no age, it would seem, have men written so much about religion, while practising it so little." And her chapter on Law is thoughtful and complete. It includes, incidentally, as wise and succinct an exposition of Jacob Boehme as we know—more direct than Boutroux's study of that mystic.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

WOMEN OF THE COUNTRY. By GERTRUDE BONE. With frontispiece by MUIRHEAD BONE. Duckworth. 2s. 6d. net.

Few of those who have written about the lives of the poor have approached their subject in the fine, selective spirit of Mrs. Bone. She is fully aware of the coarser side of life in a country district, of its ordinariness, its routine, and the sordidness which does not always rise into tragedy. But for her "the interest lies in the fineness which may be elicited from this life, in the human feeling, however unconscious, which, "disciplined by the same forces which break the floods and the earth," is not for her at least wholly "querulous, ignoble, disappointing." She recognises it as "a world where ability to work becomes a kind of morality, and lack of physical strength to procure the means of subsistence a moral downfall," but it is just this recognition which provides her with her contrasts, her light and shade, and enables her to reveal the charm and delicacy of a working woman more than usually endowed with fine sensibility and charity. With exquisite economy of language and simplicity in narrative and description, she conveys to us the personality of Anne Hilton, the spinster who lives alone in her cottage, doing her housework, making her butter, seeing her neighbours—we see her most characteristically in the "grave light" of her "orderly room"; and we are aware of the whole rustic setting, the atmosphere of a placid countryside beneath an impressive sky. And the other women, as they are introduced one by one in short chapters of quiet description and dialogue, farmers' and labourers' wives and daughters, well-to-do and poor, independent or pathetically helpless, are separate individuals passing, in their unconscious way, judgment upon life, as they are contrasted with this grave, religious, eccentric woman, Anne Hilton. To many of her neighbours Anne was merely "queer" or uninteresting. "Young women, and older men with wives to guide their perceptions, thought her absurd, but young men seldom did so." Mrs. Bone has given to her the individuality and the interest of a fine portrait. From a very slight theme, and in very small compass, she has produced something exquisite and wholly charming.

FICTION

UNQUENCHED FIRE. By ALICE GERSTENBERG. John Long. 6s.

The Americans make a fetish of energy till their strenuousness becomes nothing more than a formula, and sitting still in an armchair can look quite vivid and real beside it. The obsession infects many of their novels, and this is one of such. Everything goes slap-bang. The sentences dash past one like trolley-cars, the characters talk like the railway guard as he slams the doors of the train and shouts "right away!" It is exhilarating but exhausting. This brisk-stepping tale has a theatrical background, and the life of the touring actor in the States is portrayed with the sureness that comes of close acquaintance.

SONS AND LOVERS. By D. H. LAWRENCE. Duckworth and Co. 6s.

A strange book this, full of haunting memories, which perhaps, if not entirely successful, must yet be welcomed as an achievement. It was evident from the author's first book, "The White Peacock," that here was a writer who not only had something to say, but who was gifted with an unusual sensitiveness and receptiveness of sympathy and observation. "Sons and Lovers" confirms the impression. It is full of good things, full of charm, full of truthful delineations of character, if a little rambling, a little over-long, a little meticulous in unnecessary detail. There is a sentence in the book which would seem rather apposite in these days. In a conversation between the man and the woman he loves, she says, "So a man can give *all* himself to a work, whereas a woman

can only give the unimportant part of herself." If it is true, she says, it is a great shame. The book in a way is built round that theme. The woman whom the man loves, and who passionately loves him, he does not marry. When finally he asks her whether she will have him to marry, and she asks him whether he really wants to, he replies, "Not much." It is the end. The work of life to him is more than its illusions. It is in little flashes like this that Lawrence excels, but the book has much more in it than this. The descriptions of mining life, the study of the rough, rather sodden father, and that of the refined and sensitive mother above her station in life, is a remarkable piece of writing. All through, the characters are most carefully thought out and distinctively edged in, so much so that one has to read the book very carefully to grasp its charm and truthfulness, which is one of the great qualities of Mr. Lawrence's work. Then, again, there is great beauty of expression, a wonderful sympathy with nature and flowers and the hidden springs of humanity, and a fine understanding of the lives of these mining people he depicts. This is certainly a book which stands out far above the ordinary novel. It brings the author's reputation very high. It makes one think that Mr. Lawrence is going to be a great writer. As it is, of all the young writers he is quite the most promising.

UNPATH'D WATERS. By FRANK HARRIS. John Lane.

A new volume of stories by the author of "Elder Conklin" is something of a literary event in these days of the commercial money-rigged book, and once more Mr. Frank Harris shows that he has not lost his power or his cunning. The three best stories in the volume are "The Miracle of the Stigmata," "The King of the Jews," "An English Saint," which all appeared in THE ENGLISH REVIEW. The new ones, "The Holy Man," "The Irony of Chance," "The Spider and the Fly," are of a more modern kind, but in "The Magic Glasses" Harris is once more the deep observer of life and the humanities. The interest of these stories lies in a curiously felicitous choice of phrase, and always an atmosphere from underneath which leaves rather an after-impression than the one it makes at the moment, as is the case with more superficial and glittering work. The volume is interesting, too, because is shows the author in two opposite and contradictory lights: first of all, in his best stories, as of a deeply religious nature, and secondly, in his cynical moments, as a pamphleteer. The difference in workmanship is strangely instanced by this frame of mind.

"The Miracle of the Stigmata" is a beautiful thing told in beautiful English; the story will probably live. But "Mr. Jacob's Philosophy," on the other hand, is only very smart journalistic work. One can find that sort of thing at its best in the "Journal." The most ambitious story of all is "An English Saint," which is really a condensed novel, and so, strictly speaking, as a story is somewhat a failure, for technically it is much too long. All the same, it is an astonishing piece of writing, and anyone who reads the evolution of the young Oxford ascetic under the tutelary world-wisdom of Mrs. Leighton cannot fail to be struck by the curious atmosphere of reality which makes these two people almost friends of ours—people that we would not forget. Gerald is, in fact, a type—an English type. The author's study of this individual marks him out a true artist, one, that is, who not only sympathises and so understands, but also portrays and so convinces; and if a tag is to be used about this volume it is that these stories convince, even the less successful ones. They are full of interest, and they are full of that indefinable term, literary expression. In short, whether one approves or not of their subject, whether the Christianity or anti-Semitism of Mr. Frank Harris delights or offends, the total impression a man gets from this book is one of keen intellectual pleasure. Now and again there are bitternesses, and, perhaps, a rather spiteful outlook, but always there is observation, always there is power, always there is the restraint of the artist.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

POETRY

POEMS. By ALICE MEYNELL. Burns and Oates. 5*s*. net.

Some seventy-odd short poems as the collected labour of a life's uttered song bespeaks a chaste and frugal patience that not one of the separate poems in this collection will belie. The stuff and substance of the song is as truly ordered by this frugal spirit as its scope. Never do the larger themes, such as might demand a plenitude of speech, stir in her the wish to sing. The "Letter from a Girl to her Own Old Age," that Ruskin praised, is indeed almost the only occasion when such a subject stirred her to the evocation of numbers. Usually it is a chance word that, in a neat torsion, she bends back upon itself, expressing the unquestioning indignation it first stirred in her, as in "Parentage" or in "St. Catherine of Siena," or, very typically, in "Maternity":

> One wept whose only child was dead,
> New-born, ten years ago.
> "Weep not; he is in bliss," they said.
> She answered, "Even so.
> "Ten years ago was born in pain.
> A child, not now forlorn.
> But oh, ten years ago, in vain,
> A mother, a mother was born."

The mood of those two tautly-strung stanzas is the mood of the better part of this very exquisite volume of song, whether it be expressed in reproof or in a grave spirit of play from one who turns aside a moment from her customary gesture of grave contemplation. Each poem seems, at first glance, to be slight enough. It is when one has read through a number of them that the mind discovers how remote, and even difficult of access, they are. That is to say, they attain, by reason of their very chastity and delicate dignity, to that incommensurability that is the unfailing mark of great song. They express a spiritual curiosity that is rare, and least obvious when it seems most so. The technique of the expression is as unhesitating and unhastening as the mood itself. Each note is clearly perceived, and is as clearly struck upon the strings, with a clarity of tone that is as pure as the light thrown by a diamond—bright, sharp, and hard. This in the more recondite way of song is a quality that seems as paradoxical as the intellectual twists of her sudden attitude. It produces, even as her conceptions produce, a sense of clearness that is misleading, for they both suggest shallowness when there is great depth. It is the seeming shallowness that first accosts the mind: it is the depth that a fuller acquaintance proves: until the paucity of her whole volume of poetry becomes in the end more difficult to judge than the greater bulk of a simpler, more passionate manner. Its qualities are all implicit, never explicit; inherent rather than voluble. It chooses its way carefully, stepping delicately as it goes, moving gravely as it passes. According to the mood in us, it begets either a great satisfaction or a great dissatisfaction, for it is not easy to breathe this rarer air. But this much is sure: however we greet it, this poetry will remain, even because it continues to defy us, and will not easily be subjected to our convenience.

THEOCRITUS, BION, AND MOSCHUS. Translated into English Verse by ARTHUR S. WAY, D.Lit. Cambridge University Press. 5*s*.

The talent and sympathetic insight of Dr. Way have enabled him to produce a translation of these three classics which, taken all round, surpasses every previous attempt to render their spirit into English verse. Look at this picture of the old fisherman:

> "Two fishermen old and grey on beds of the sea-moss dried
> In a watled cabin lay and slumbered side by side
> Half-propped by the leafy wall; and thereby were the tools of their toil
> Strewn round—reed fishing-rods tall, and creels for the ocean-spoil;
> And there were the fish-hooks hung, lines, weels for the crab claw-cloven,
> Bait to which sea-weed clung, and labyrinth-traps rush-woven: . . . ."

The famous fifteenth idyll, too, is beautifully done. Some day, let us hope, we shall realise that a deliberate mistranslation of such songs as the twenty-third and thirtieth idyll, whatever its motives, is unfair to Theocritus and an insult to the intelligence of his modern admirers. *Quousque tandem?*

DAILY BREAD. By WILFRID WILSON GIBSON. 3rd edition. Elkin Mathews. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

It is an odd coincidence that, side by side with Dr. Way's translation of Theocritus, we should find lying Mr. Gibson's "Daily Bread." For if any of our moderns have the Theocritean touch, it is he. Mr. Gibson has cultivated the same splendid nudity of expression and contempt of superfluities and accessories; he gives what the other gave: a glimpse into the eternal verities of mankind. From the trivial incidents of life he contrives to extract, as did the other, their poignant human essentials. All his characters are primitive creatures heaving with an undercurrent of wistful melancholy and toiling, in the sweat of their brow, to wrest a livelihood from Mother Earth. The "Summer-dawn," for instance—in landscape, atmosphere, grouping, and sentiment: it is pure Theocritus. Conditions have changed, of course, and become more complex; but the same dramatic simplicity and truthfulness pervade his sketches of the industrial state. He dwells, perhaps, too fondly on the sadder aspects of humble folk, as though oblivious of their boisterous moods of relaxation. But the pleasures of the poor, for all their intensity, are less manifold than those of the rich; joy is the great equaliser of temperaments among them, merging them all into one common type; whereas sorrow, that differentiates their characters and feelings, calls for corresponding refinements of poetic treatment.

TRAVEL

THE FRINGE OF THE EAST. By HARRY CHARLES LUKACH. Macmillan. 12*s.*

Mr. Lukach has been uncommonly happy in his choice of a title. The Fringe of the East! What could be more appropriate? About this fringe he wanders in leisurely, scholarly fashion, reposing awhile with the monks of Athos, then journeying on again to Rhodes and Cyprus and Aleppo, and through other provinces of the old Turkish Empire. He knows the history of all these places; he throws many side-lights upon their inhabitants, and makes plain, not only by means of excellent photographs, but through the medium of his personal literary qualities, the beauty of their landscape and architectural ruins. It is a really noteworthy book of travel, full of charm.

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